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MESSAGE OF GREETING
from His Holiness Patriarch ALEKSY II of Moscow
and All Russia
to His Holiness BARTHOLOMAIOS I, Ecumenical
Patriarch, on His
Ascension to the Constantinople Patriarchal Throne

To His Holiness BARTHOLOMAIOS I, Archbishop of Constantinople
the New Rome and the Ecumenical Patriarch

Your Holiness beloved Brother in the Lord,

It is with the feeling of spiritual joy that I am forwarding to You my cordial greeting on Your ascension to the Constantinople Patriarchal Throne.

This remarkable event in the life of your Church is a joy also for the Russian Orthodox Church, her archpastors, clergy and laity.

Today we are witnessing with gratification that in the course of a millennium our Churches have been building their relations on the basis of Christian love. The good news of Crucified and Resurrected Christ was brought to our Northern lands from the Bosphorus and Holy Orthodoxy was established among the Slav peoples.

Now, too, a Russian believer cherishes feelings of Christian love for the Church of Constantinople. It was particularly manifest in 1987, during the visit paid to the Russian Orthodox Church by His Holiness Patriarch Dimitrios I of blessed memory.

I greet Your Holiness with the Patriarchal enthronization on behalf of the plenitude of the Russian Orthodox Church, and wish that Your service may be long and blessed. Along with these good wishes I express my firm hope that the traditional ties between our Local Churches will successfully develop and deepen in the spirit of Gospel love for the good of Holy Orthodoxy.

Mentally, we will be together with You on this solemn day, offering up prayers to the Chief Shepherd Christ that He may grant You Heavenly assistance in Your lofty ministry.

With the brotherly love in the Lord,

ALEKSY, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

October 31, 1991
Moscow

GREETINGS TO THE PRIMATES
of the Local Orthodox Churches of Rumania and Cyprus

To His Beatitude Patriarch Teoctist

Bucharest, Rumania

I cordially greet Your Beatitude on the fifth anniversary of Your service on the throne of the First Hierarchs of the Holy Rumanian Church. We share in Your joy prayerfully, and wish You with love the undiminishing help of God and fortitude for many years to come.

With brotherly love in the Lord,

ALEKSY, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

November 13, 1991

His Beatitude Patriarch Teoctist, Primate of the Rumanian Orthodox Church, was also congratulated by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations.

To His Beatitude Archbishop CHRYSOSTOMOS

Nicosia, Cyprus

Your Beatitude, please accept our cordial greetings on Your name day. With all my heart I wish you prayerful intercession of St. John Chrysostom and the saints of the ancient Church of Cyprus. May the All-Merciful Lord bless, through their prayers, Your archpastoral labours for the good of the faithful.

With brotherly love in Christ,

ALEKSY, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

November 11, 1991

* * *

His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos, Primate of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus, was also congratulated by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations.

Letter to the Primate of the Polish Orthodox Church

To His Beatitude VASILY, Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland

Your Beatitude,

I cordially greet You and ask You to accept my best wishes.

It is with great joy that I have welcomed the news of the Polish Orthodox Church, true to its Christian duty of love and mercy, proffering hospitality, medical aid and spiritual guidance to children who suffered from the Chernobyl disaster.

I express sincere gratitude to Your Holiness, to Archbishop Savva of Belostok and Gdansk, initiator of the charity action, hierarchs, parishes, the Fellowship of Orthodox Youth, all organizations and persons who have taken a direct part in this God-pleasing act.

Let us pray to the Lord that He may give His blessing for all good undertakings like that.

May the Lord help You in Your service of the Holy Church.

*KIRILL, Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad,
Head of the Department for External Church Relations*

November 12, 1991

Visit of His Holiness ALEKSY II to Great Britain

From October 23 to 31 His Holiness Aleksey II of Moscow and All Russia was on a visit to Great Britain. The schedule of the visit is given in brief below.

Among the party who accompanied His Holiness and took part in the meetings and talks were Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations, and Bishop Yevlery of Chimkent and Tselinograd.

Visit of Patriarch ALEKSY II to Archbishop George Carey of Canterbury

On October 28 an official visit began of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey II of Moscow and All Russia to His Grace Dr. George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England and Metropolitan.

As the Joint Communique on the results of the visit says: "The Holy Orthodox Church of Russia and the Church of England have long enjoyed a warm and mutually enriching relationship." Both Churches have deep historical roots. Both have been and remain true to their peoples, considering it to be their social duty. Mutual friendly feelings in the current century may be traced in the correspondence between Patriarch St. Tikhon and Archbishop Randall Davidson. Now a theological conversation is to be held in May 1992 on the theme: "The Creation of God and Human Creativity: Natural Science and the Doctrine of Creation." For two years now a small coordinating group has been working which studies possibilities of promoting relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Church of England, particularly in the sphere of church service under different social conditions. These bilateral contacts are maintained on the background of all-Orthodox-Anglican dialogue.

In the course of the three-day visit Patriarch Aleksey II and Archbishop George Carey had talks devoted to the possibilities of exchange between the two Churches on the basis of good relations already established. A kind of illustrations to the talks were visits of Patriarch Aleksey and his party to the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford and the Ripon College Seminary in Caddeston. At the hospital the guests saw the work of chaplains who take care and give spiritual guidance to believers of different confessions. At the seminary His Holiness participated in a discussion with the teachers and chaplains of the hospital, prison and secular higher educational establishment. Discussed were various aspects of social service and pastoral guidance in the modern multicultural industrial society and problems of training people for such service and Christian witness.

On October 28, in the evening, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey II attended divine service at the Westminster Abbey. The Archbishop presented His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia with a facsimile edition of the 13th-century Lambeth Apo-

calypse, and the Primate of the Russian Church handed the Primate of the Church of England a facsimile edition of the 11th-century Ostromirov Gospel. In his address of greeting Archbishop George Carey spoke of the prospects opened before the peoples of Russia and its Church at the present historical moment and the difficulties to be encountered upon the new path. In this context he expressed hope that the two Churches would be able together to carry the good news of the Gospel to the younger generation of people in their countries. Patriarch Aleksey expressed gratification with the all-Orthodox-Anglican dialogue under way, but noted that ordination of women practised in some provinces of the Anglican Communion unfortunately present insurmountable obstacles for mutual understanding in doctrinal questions. Nevertheless the Patriarch stressed the importance of common efforts in the social service of the two Churches. He appreciated the prayerful and material aid rendered by the Church of England to the Russian Orthodox Church, which is looking for ways of spiritual regeneration of her people within the framework of a democratic social order guaranteeing citizens a life worthy of man. The Primate of the Russian Church also favoured cooperation with the Church of England within the Conference of European Churches and in the World Council of Churches. Patriarch Aleksey II and Archbishop George Carey offered up a prayer of commemoration at the tomb of St. Edward the Confessor.

On the same day His Holiness met with Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd.

On October 29, Patriarch Aleksey had a private talk with Archbishop George Carey on the development of relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Church of England. Joining in the talk were Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad and the Rt. Rev. Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford. Later in the day His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey II of Moscow and All Russia was received by Her Majesty the Queen at the Buckingham Palace. After the talk Archbishop of Canterbury gave a reception in honour of His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All

Russia at the Jerusalem Chamber of the Westminster Abbey attended by important public persons of the United Kingdom. In the evening dinner was given in honour of His Holiness by the Nicaean Club whose President the Archbishop of Canterbury is. The club whose membership amounts to 500 considers it its task to help Orthodox Christians on the territory of Great Britain.

On October 30, in the Lambeth Palace, the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, where His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia was staying, the Primates of the two Churches met with representatives of the CEC member Churches in Great Britain and Ireland to discuss prospects of development of inter-Church relations in Europe,

and then took part in a joint press conference which centred on the problems of the Russian Orthodox Church. Then followed a reception given in honour of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia by the Archbishop of Canterbury for representatives of all Churches on the British Isles at which the joint communique was made public.

In the course of his stay in Great Britain, His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia also met with representatives of different spheres of British international and public life and business circles.

On October 31, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia and his party returned to Moscow.

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

**Issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. GEORGE CAREY,
and His Holiness Patriarch ALEKSY II of Moscow and All Russia**

From October 28 to 31, 1991, His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Aleksy II visited the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. Dr. George Carey. It was the first visit of a Patriarch of Moscow to an Archbishop of Canterbury since the visit of Patriarch Aleksy I to Archbishop Michael Ramsey in September 1964. It was also the first opportunity for the present Archbishop to welcome the head of another Church to London since his Enthronement in Canterbury in April 1991.

The Holy Orthodox Church of Russia and the Church of England have long enjoyed a warm and mutually enriching relationship. As Churches we respect each other's deep historical roots within our respective lands. We appreciate too our common experience as Churches which have both nurtured and broadened national loyalties within our countries. During this century mutual friendships extend back to the correspondence between Patriarch Tikhon and Archbishop Randall Davidson.

In 1956 relationships were consolidated at the joint theological conference in Moscow, and in 1964 Patriarch Aleksy I visited Archbishop Michael Ramsey at Lambeth. In 1988 Archbishop Runcie led a strong delegation to the celebration in Moscow of the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus.

The strength of this mutual relationship has been nurtured by the presence within each of our two nations of our Churches. The Russian Cathedral in London under the leadership of Metropolitan Antony of Surozh has contributed much to the spiritual life of the Church of England. The first eucharist to be celebrated for seventy one years in the Anglican Church of St. Andrew, Moscow, took place in July 1991. Representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate attended this eucharist and this marked another significant development within our relationship.

In the past two years a small liaison group has worked to deepen our mutual friendship and to seek means by which we may offer each other assistance in our common mission. These discussions have revealed the pastoral ministry of the Church in a variety of contexts, to be the place where we can offer each other immediate support and mutual encouragement. So fruitful have these conversations been that they have led us to plan joint theological discussions on the basis of our common mission. The first meeting of this theological consultation will be in May 1992, when the subject to be discussed will be: "The Creation of God and Human Creativity: Natural Science and the Doctrine of Creation."

All these developments stand in the context of our two Churches being full members of the joint dialogue between the Anglican Communion and the Orthodox Churches. The significance of this first meeting between His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and the Archbishop of Canterbury is thus very great. By their meeting and by their

participating together within worship, the Patriarch and the Archbishop have consolidated the relationship which already exists and have pointed to new horizons in our developing relationships as Churches.

In these three days the Patriarch and the Archbishop have sought ways of learning more of developments within each other's Churches. On October 28 the Patriarchal party visited Oxford. The visit included an opportunity to view the facilities of the John Radcliffe Hospital. The Russian Orthodox Church is now being called upon to work in hospitals and other medical institutions and is keen to view similar facilities in Western Nations. This tour of the hospital was followed by a seminar at Ripon College, Cuddesdon, where theologians with Chaplains from a hospital, a prison and from higher education discussed developments in pastoral ministry and training for pastoral ministry.

On the evening of October 28, the Archbishop and Patriarch attended Evensong for the Feast of St. Simon and St. Jude in Westminster Abbey. Gifts were exchanged, the Archbishop presenting the Patriarch with a facsimile edition of the thirteenth century Lambeth Apocalypse, and the Patriarch presenting the Archbishop with a facsimile edition of the eleventh century Ostromirov Gospel.

During Evensong, as he greeted the Patriarch, the Archbishop spoke of the challenges facing the people of Russia and indeed the Russian Church, at this historic moment in the life of their country. He spoke too of his hope that the two Churches might find new ways of exploring common mission and proclaiming the Gospel afresh to this generation. The Patriarch spoke about the new situation in his country opening up many opportunities for a free development of different sides of the Church's life, and underlined the importance of a joint social ministry of the two Churches. The Patriarch also mentioned the important support given by the Church of England in prayer and otherwise to the Russian Orthodox Church as she was seeking the spiritual revival of her nation and peoples in a democratic society where a life worthy of man will be ensured for all citizens. The Patriarch underlined that the two Churches should continue their co-operation. Later the Patriarch prayed at the tomb of St. Edward the Confessor for Christian unity and for God's blessing upon the two Churches. Later that evening the Patriarch was received by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Rt. Hon. Douglas Hurd MP.

On Tuesday, October 29, the Archbishop and the Patriarch had private talks on the growing relationship between the two Churches. At these talks they were joined by Metropolitan Antony of Surozh, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad; the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt. Rev. Richard Harries, and also their respective ecumenical staff. Later, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy was received by Her Majesty The Queen at Buckingham Palace. Following the visit to Her Majesty The Queen, the Archbishop of Canterbury was host to a reception at the Jerusalem Chamber in Westminster Abbey, which was attended by a number of people from within public life in the United Kingdom. On the evening of the same day the Patriarch was entertained on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury and in his presence by the Nicaean Club. During his speech at this dinner His Holiness graciously invited His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury to pay an official visit to Russia in 1992. The Archbishop received the invitation with much gratitude and looked forward to visiting the Patriarch in Moscow at an early opportunity.

On Wednesday, October 30, Patriarch Aleksy and the Archbishop of Canterbury met with representatives of the member Churches of the Conference of European Churches, within Britain and Ireland, at Lambeth Palace, to discuss the developing relationships of Churches within Europe. At lunchtime the Archbishop of Canterbury was host at Lambeth Palace to a reception for representatives of all Churches within Britain, in honour of Patriarch Aleksy.

The visit was characterized throughout by warm and constructive conversation. Present relationships between the two Churches are seen as the foundation upon which growth towards closer communion may be built. Differences which remain were discussed with openness and with the intention to explore ways of moving beyond the obstacles which hinder the growth of our fellowship.

ALEKSY II
Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

GEORGE
Archbishop of Canterbury

October 31, 1991

Pastoral Visit of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Surozh Diocese

The Surozh Diocese, embracing the flock of the Russian Orthodox Church on the British Isles, is the 22nd of those visited by the now ruling Russian First Hierarch since he was elected Patriarch in the summer of 1990.

On October 27, Sunday, at the invitation of Metropolitan Antony of Surozh, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia celebrated Divine Liturgy at the London Cathedral of the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin and All the Saints. He was assisted by Metropolitans Antony of Surozh, Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Bishops Anatoly of Kerch and Yelenvy of Chimkent and Tselinograd and also by the clergy of the Surozh Diocese and Archdeacon Andrei Mazur of the Moscow Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany.

The offertory was meant for the social service of the Russian Orthodox Church within its native territory.

After the service the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church bestowed a blessing upon numerous worshippers, part of them non-Orthodox. After a common repast at a near-by parish centre at the Church of the Holy Trinity, which offers premises to the Russian Orthodox parish for big events, His Holiness had a talk with the children of the Russian Church on the

British Isles in the course of which he spoke of the life of the Mother Church in her Homeland, of her regeneration and the difficulties she faces, spiritual achievements and deplorable losses, hopes and apprehensions, labours and disturbances. Back in the Cathedral, His Holiness discussed with the clergy of the Surozh Diocese pastoral tasks and problems typical of the life and witness of an Orthodox community in Diaspora.

On that same day the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia was visited at the London Cathedral Church of the Surozh Diocese by Archbishop Gregorios of Phyteira, Exarch to the Patriarch of Constantinople in Great Britain, who, later in the evening, gave a reception at his Phyteira-House residence in honour of the Patriarch of Moscow. The reception was attended by the Ambassador of Greece, diplomatic representative of Cyprus in Great Britain, and important members of the Greek ethnic community in Great Britain.

Metropolitan Antony of Surozh showed Patriarch Aleksy cordial consideration throughout his stay in the country, and took part in all church and important public meetings.

Visit of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II to the Middle East

On September 28-October 7, 1991, at the invitation of His Beatitude Parthenios III, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa and His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatios IV of Antioch the Great and All the East, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia visited the Alexandrian and Antiochian Patriarchates. According to tradition, each newly-elected Primate of a Local Church pays official visits to the Primates of Autocephalous Orthodox Churches. The trip of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy to Constantinople was the first visit of this kind.

On his tour of the Middle East the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church was accompanied by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations, Bishop Filaret of Astrakhan and Yenotayevka, Protopresbyter Matfei Stadnyuk, Dean of the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany, Moscow clergymen and staff members of the Synodal institutions. Joining

the delegation in Damascus were Metropolitan Nikolai of Nizhni Novgorod and Arzamas, Bishop Aristarkh of Gomel and Mozyr, and a group of clergymen and laymen of the Russian Orthodox Church.

At the airport of Alexandria His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy was welcomed by His Beatitude Parthenios III, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, Metropolitans Barnabas of Pelusium, Paulos of Hermoupolis, Dionysios of Nubia, Irinaios of Karthagena, Titos of Leontopolis, and Bishop Theodoros of Kirinea. The welcoming party included Archimandrite Feofan, Representative of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Patriarch of Alexandria, Metropolitan Bishoi of Damiette, representative of the Coptic Church, N. Tikhomirov, Acting Charge d'Affaires of the USSR in Egypt, L. Titov, USSR Consul-General in Alexandria, Mr. Panagyotis Cangelaris, Consul-General of the Republic of Greece, Mr. Ionas Vias, Consul of the Republic of Cyprus.

His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II and His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatios IV at the Convent of Maalula, Syria





Coptic Patriarchate in Cairo, Egypt. First row, left to right: His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II; Pope and Patriarch Shenuda III, Head of the Coptic Church; His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Parthenios III, and Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad

On the same day His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy visited the Mission of the Russian Orthodox Church in Alexandria where Archimandrite Feofan gave a reception in honour of the high guest. Attending the reception were His Beatitude Patriarch Parthenios and officials who had welcomed the Patriarch at the airport. In the evening His Holiness had a cordial meeting with the Greek Orthodox community in Alexandria.

The following day opened with the solemn divine service at the Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin in Alexandria. The Primates of the two Orthodox Churches celebrated Divine Liturgy assisted by Metropolitans Barnabas of Pelusium, Paulos of Hermoupolis, Dionysios of Nubia, Irinaios of Karthagena, Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Bishop Filaret of Astrakhan and Yenotayevka, clergy of the Alexandrian and Russian Churches. Attending the service were representatives of the Coptic, Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches, of the diplomatic corps and the city public.

The majestic cathedral built in the middle of the last century was half empty. Such, unfortunately, is the demographic situation in the Greek community of Egypt. Once scores of thousands of Greeks lived

in the country, but under President Naser their number decreased several times over. Industrious and enterprising Greeks found it difficult to implement their abilities in conditions of Egyptian socialism. Though the situation has recently changed somewhat the emigration still continues. It is not surprising, therefore, that most of the clergy of the Alexandrian Church come from Greece.

After the Divine Liturgy the Primates of the two Churches exchanged speeches. Then the brotherly meeting of the two Patriarchs took place at the Throne Hall of the Patriarchate. The Primate of the Alexandrian Church awarded His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy the Order of St. Mark, 1st Class. The guests made a tour of the Patriarchate premises. The unique church museum and a one-thousand-year-old library particularly impressed the delegation members.

In the evening His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy paid a visit to the USSR Consulate-General where he had a brief talk with its staff. V. Polyakov, USSR Ambassador in Egypt, gave a reception in his residence in honour of His Holiness.

The following day, September 30, was one of the busiest. In the morning the two Patriarchs and the persons accompanying them visited the Russian Ortho-



His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy and Supreme Mufti sheik Ahmad Keftaro, Damascus

dox Church of Prince St. Aleksandr Nevsky. The small church was opened in the old multistory mansion of the former Russian Consulate, in several first-floor rooms, after the 1917 revolution. His Holiness presented the church with eucharistic vessels.

The high guests visited the Coptic Cathedral of St. Mark and were welcomed by Bishop Benjamin of Manufeya. A particle of the relics of the Holy Apostle, which had been handed to the Coptic Church not long before by the Pope of Rome, was carried out to His Holiness for veneration. The guests went down to the basement and venerated at the place of the supposed burial of the Apostle (it is disputed by the Alexandrian Patriarchate).

From the Coptic cathedral the delegation proceeded to an ancient cloister of the Alexandrian Church—the Monastery of St. Sabba. There, in the monastery cathedral, the Primate of the two Churches exchanged speeches.

On the same day the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church accompanied by His Beatitude Patriarch Parthenios paid a visit to the Mayor of Alexandria, Mr. Es-Seid Ismail El Gausaki.

Later in the day His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy and his party went to Cairo by car. On their way

to the Egyptian capital they stopped at the Coptic Monastery of St. Bishoi (Paisy) in the Nitria Desert. The delegation was warmly welcomed by the Primate of the Coptic Church, Pope Shenuda III. The guests made a tour of the ancient cloister and venerated at the relics of our common saint—St. Paisy. The Coptic community, the second largest in Egypt unites about 10 million people. Its relations with the Moslem majority has not always been cloudless. Thus, in 1981, not long before the assassination of Sadat, Pope Shenuda III was put under home arrest for a year and a half. Now the situation has stabilized somewhat, but tension still exists in some regions.

In the evening the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and members of the Patriarchal delegation arrived in Cairo, and an hour later there was a meeting with the Soviet public at the USSR Embassy in Egypt. His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy spoke of the changes in religious life that had taken place in our country in the last six years, and of the Russian Orthodox Church today, of the difficulties she faced. He answered numerous questions.

On October 1, in the morning, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy, His Beatitude Patriarch Parthenios, Metropolitan Kirill and Archimandrite Feofan were received

by President Hosni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

During the talk the President spoke in detail of the impressions of his visit to the USSR just concluded. On his part, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy gave a high assessment of the Egyptian government's efforts in the cause of stabilizing international situation, as well as of its experience in the sphere of peaceful coexistence of different religious and ethnic communities.

In Cairo His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy had a meeting and talks with Pope Shenuda III and sheikh Gadel Khak, Rector of the Islamic Al-Azgar University. Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church visited the Greek and Arab communities in Cairo, venerated at the graves of the Patriarchs of Alexandria in the Monastery of St. George, and saw the sights of the city.

On the same day His Holiness left Cairo for Damascus. At the Damascus airport Patriarch Aleksy was welcomed by His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatios IV of Antioch the Great and All the East, Metropolitans Yasily of Hebron, Alexios of Elios, Elia of Aleppo, Youhanna of Lattaquie, Elia of Epiphany, bishops of the Antiochian Church, A. Zotov, USSR Ambassador in Syria, representatives of the Orthodox public.

His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy visited the Antiochian Patriarchate and conducted a moleben at the Patriarchal Cathedral.

On the following day, accompanied by Patriarch Ignatios, His Holiness visited the ancient convents—of Maalula, where he conducted a moleben to St. Thecla the Martyr, and of Seidnaya, where he prayed before a miracle-working icon of the Theotokos.

Upon his return to Damascus His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy visited the Mission of the Russian Orthodox Church. A moleben was conducted in its Domestic Chapel of St. Ignatius Theophoros the Holy Martyr. Later His Holiness received there sheikh Ahmad Keftaro, Supreme Mufti of Syria. On the same day His Holiness visited the Syro-Jacobite Patriarch, Ignatius Zakka Iwas, and then paid a reply visit to the Supreme Mufti.

In the evening, A. Zotov arranged a meeting of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Embassy staff and USSR citizens who work and live in Damascus.

In the same evening, discussing the problem facing the Orthodox world, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy and His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatios expressed unanimity on the issue. His Beatitude expressed full

His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy paying a visit to Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir of Lebanon





His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy and Lebanese President Elias Hraoui at a reception in Beirut, October 6, 1991

support of the Russian Orthodox Church in her striving to overcome disastrous consequences of the Uniates' activity and of attempts at proselytism undertaken by some confessions among the Orthodox. His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy, on his part, declared the Moscow Patriarchate's solidarity with the Antiochian Church and her children suffering from the crisis and political instability in the Middle East.

On October 5, in the morning, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and his party visited the Antiochian Patriarchate where an exchange of gifts took place. On the following day His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy met with Hafez Al Asad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic. Then His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatios gave a dinner in honour of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy attended by Jacobite Syrian Patriarch Zakka Iwas, Archbishop Luigi Akkolti, Syrian government members, heads and representatives of the diplomatic corps, and the Syrian public.

After the dinner Patriarch Aleksy and his party, accompanied by His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatios left for Lebanon by car.

As soon as the cortege crossed the Syrian-Lebanese border it was placed under guard of the Lebanese

Army. Armed soldiers were present at all events in the course of the entire visit: manifestations of extremism might have been expected in the country where over the recent ten years two presidents and one prime minister have been assassinated.

On the border the high guests were welcomed by the hierarchs of the Antiochian Church—Metropolitans Elias of Beirut, Spyridon of Zahle, Gregorios of the Mount Lebanon; representative of the Lebanese President and Minister of Transport, Shauki Fahuri, clerics and laymen of the Sister Church.

In the evening, jubilant crowds of Orthodox Lebanese welcomed Patriarch Aleksy at the gates of the Convent of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin in the Temple, where a thanksgiving moleben was conducted.

During his stay in Lebanon the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church visited the Balamon Monastery where he concelebrated Divine Liturgy with Patriarch Ignatios, and met with the faculty and students of the Theological Seminary and the Orthodox University located on the monastery grounds.

His Holiness met and had talks with His Beatitude Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir, Head of the Maronite Com-

munity, hierarchs of the Orthodox Church, USSR Ambassador in Lebanon G. Ilyichev, our citizens who live and work in the republic.

On October 6, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy was received by President Elias Hraoui of Lebanon. At the solemn reception, the Lebanese President awarded His Holiness the Order of the Cedar of Lebanon, the highest award in the republic.

On October 7, in the morning, on their way to the airport, the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church visited the central part of Beirut. There among the ruins of the once beautiful buildings they saw with their own eyes the bitter fruits of extremism and inter-religious strife.

On his way to Moscow, His Holiness made a few hours stop in Istanbul. At the Cathedral of St. George the Great Martyr at Fanar, near the Residence of the Primate of the Constantinople Patriarchate, His Holiness conducted a panikhida at the coffin of the departed Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I. Patriarch

Aleksy met with Acting Chairman of the Holy Synod Metropolitan Bartholomaios of Chalcedon (now Patriarch).

Even the brief stay in the city could not exclude the visit to the greatest shrine of Universal Orthodoxy—St. Sophia of Constantinople. Devastated by the Turks at the end of the 15th century, it was turned into a mosque. At the beginning of the 1920s it was turned into a museum. All these years a prayer to the Lord has never been heard within the walls that once impressed with their beauty the envoys of Grand Prince Vladimir. And now the troparion to the Holy Trinity resounded under the vaults of the church empty on a holiday. "In 1988 hymns were first sung in the Cathedral of St. Isaac," His Holiness said, "and it also seemed something out of the ordinary. Hymns may yet be heard here. Divine services may yet be conducted within these walls sacred for every Orthodox."

Sergei BELAVENETS

Right to left: His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatios IV of Antioch, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy and Bishop Nifon of Philippopolis visiting the Convent of Seidnaya, Syria



Services Conducted by His Holiness Patriarch ALEKSY II

On October 8, the Feast of St. Sergy of Radonezh, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey II celebrated Divine Liturgy in the Dormition Cathedral of the Trinity-St. Sergy Lavra assisted by Metropolitans Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad; Nikodim of Kharkov and Bogodukhov, Nikolai of Nizhni Novgorod and Arzamas, Mefody of Voronezh and Lipetsk; Archbishops Makary of Klin, Administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in the USA and Canada, Kliment, of Kaluga and Borovsk, Sergy of Solnechnogorsk, Yevgeny of Tambov and Michurinsk; Bishops Arseny of Istra, Vadim of Irkutsk and Chita, Filaret of Astrakhan and Yenotayevka, Viktor of Podolsk, Varfolomei of Volyn and Lutsk, Aristarkh of Gomel and Mozyr, Varsonofy of Saransk and Mordovia, Sergy of Ternopol and Kremenets, Dimitry of Tobolsk and Tyumen, Ierofei of Balashikha. After the Liturgy a traditional moleben was conducted in the Lavra square.

On October 9, the Feast of St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey celebrated Divine Liturgy in the Grand Cathedral of the Monastery of the Don Icon of the Mother of God assisted by Bishops Mark of Argentina and South America and Arseny of Istra. Then a moleben was conducted at the Smaller Cathedral, at the tomb of the saint.

On October 13, the eve of the Feast of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey officiated at All-Night Vigil at the Church of the Protecting Veil in Lushchikov Lane assisted by Bishop Arseny of Istra.

On October 14, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey celebrated Divine Liturgy at the Protection Veil Church in Red Square, assisted by Archbishop Sergy of Solnechnogorsk, Bishops Anatoly of Kerch, Mark of Argentina and South America and Arseny of Istra. After the Liturgy there was a festal procession.

On October 18, the Feast of the Saints of Moscow,

His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey celebrated Divine Liturgy, and on the eve, officiated at All-Night Vigil at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany assisted by Metropolitans Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad; Archbishops Valentin of Korsun, Vladimir of Tashkent and Central Asia (only at the Liturgy); Bishops Panteleimon of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk (only at the Liturgy), Mark of Argentina and South America (only at the Liturgy), Antony of Krasnoyarsk and Yeniseisk, Arseny of Istra, Georgy of Chelyabinsk and Zlatoust, Yevlogy of Vladimir and Suzdal (only at the Liturgy). During the Liturgy His Holiness ordained Monk Avraamy Knyazhentsev hierodeacon, and Proto-deacon Sergy Toroptsov—presbyter.

On November 4, the Feast of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey celebrated Divine Liturgy, and, on the eve, officiated at All-Night Vigil at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany assisted by Metropolitans Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna (only at the Liturgy), Vladimir of Rostov and Novocherkassk, Pitirim of Volokolamsk and Yuriev; Archbishops Valentin of Korsun, Sergy of Solnechnogorsk; Bishops Arseny of Istra and Viktor of Podolsk. After the Liturgy a moleben was conducted before the specially venerated copy of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God.

On November 28, His Holiness the Patriarch assisted by Metropolitans Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Vladimir of Rostov and Novocherkassk, Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Pitirim of Volokolamsk and Yuriev; Archbishops Platon of Yaroslavl and Rostov, Kliment of Kaluga and Borovsk, Sergy of Solnechnogorsk; Bishops Arseny of Istra and Viktor of Podolsk consecrated the hotel complex of the Moscow Patriarchate built next to St. Daniel's Monastery.

Visit of His Holiness the Patriarch to Optina

From October 15 to 16, 1991, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia stayed at the stauropegion Monastery of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin in the Temple in the Kaluga Diocese. The visit of His Holiness coincided with the third anniversary of the invention of the relics of St. Amvrosy and 100th anniversary of his blessed demise.

The working schedule of the Patriarch is very busy, so His Holiness arrived at the Optina Hermitage from Tushino by helicopter placed at his disposal by Air Force Moscow Military District Commander Lt.-Gen. N. Antoshkin, member of the Board of the International Fund of the Russian-Greek Spiritual Unity.

The brethren of the Monastery warmly welcomed their Holy Archimandrite. His Holiness was shown the repair and restoration works under way at the Monastery, and then, with the archpastors and clergymen who arrived for the festivities, he met at the gates of the Monastery the Kaluga Icon of the Mother of God brought from Kozelsk in festal procession. A moleben was conducted before the icon. Then Small Vespers was conducted at the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin in the Temple with the reading of the akathistos to St. Amvrosy of Optina, followed by All-Night Vigil.

On October 16, in the morning, Patriarch Aleksy celebrated Divine Liturgy. He was assisted by Archbishop Kliment of Kaluga and Borovsk, Bishops Anatoly of Kerch, Arseny of Istra, Yevlogy of Vladimir and Suzdal, Father Superior Archimandrite Venedikt, and guests in holy order.

Attending the Liturgy were the sisters of the Shamordino Convent headed by their Mother Superior Hegu-

mene Nikona and nuns of the Trinity-Skanov Convent of Penza Region with their Mother Superior Mitrofanina.

During the Liturgy His Holiness ordained two clerics — one priest, and the other deacon.

After the Liturgy, in reply to the welcoming address of Father Superior Venedikt, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy said in particular: "The feat of the Optina startsy is not merely that of monasticism, of serving the brethren of the cloister, whom they edified and strengthened spiritually, but also a feat of serving the world. Both noblemen and commoners turned to the startsy for advice. They came for the word of consolation and encouragement, to be shown the path to the Heavenly Kingdom. And the startsy found for each the word one needed, right and accessible.

"The Optina Hermitage is being reborn, the number of the brethren is growing, the same is true of the Shamordino Convent. But for those who perform their monastic feats here, the great Optina startsy show an example of service to their brethren, their sisters and the children of God who may come to the Optina Hermitage and the Shamordino Convent and be granted spiritual strength to overcome all worldly temptation and build their life on the basis of Christ's truth, commandments of the Lord and great Christian love. This continuity should be kept among the brethren and sisters of the two cloisters for which St. Amvrosy of Optina was the father, patron and prayerful intercessor!"

After the divine service a festal moleben was conducted with a festal procession and a litiya at the monastery cemetery. Patriarch Aleksy cordially congratulated all those who had arrived at the Optina Hermitage with the remarkable dates and wished the cloister spiritual growth and prosperity.

Visit of His Holiness the Patriarch to St. Petersburg

November 5-6, 1991

The 74th anniversary of the October revolution was at last marked not the Soviet way: triumphant reports and demonstration of working people gave way this year to the longed-for festivities in connection with the return to the city of its historical name of Apostle St. Peter.

On November 5, 1991, Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia arrived in St. Petersburg. It was also the first visit there of the Grand Prince Vladimir Kirillovich Romanov and his wife.

The Russian Orthodox Church marked the day of the second birth of the city with the consecration of the altar of St. Ioann of Kronshtadt (the first in the city), another Heavenly Patron of the city on the Neva. The

consecration of the altar in the right chapel of the upper church of St. Ioann's Convent was conducted on November by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy assisted by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Bishops Amvrosy of Joensuu (Finnish Orthodox Church), Lev of Novgorod and Staraya Russa and Arseny of Istra (on the consecration of the upper church in honour of the Synaxis of the Twelve Apostles see: *JMP*, No. 11, 1991).

After the divine service His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy talked in the convent chambers with A. Sobchak, Mayor of St. Petersburg, and then with Grand Prince Vladimir Kirillovich. Discussed in the latter talk were urgent tasks of Orthodox Church



His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy at the grave of Metropolitan Nikodim Rotov († 1978) in St. Petersburg

Unity — healing the split between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Church Outside Russia, and also problems of church regeneration of Russia.

On November 6, at 6 p.m., His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy conducted Great Vespers at the St. Isaac Cathedral. Attending the service were Grand Prince and Princess. Present also were Mayors of St. Petersburg and Moscow, A. Sobchak and G. Popov, People's Deputies, Union of the Russian Noblemen' Ancestors members, numerous parishioners.

On November 5, on the threshold of his visit to the USA (November 8-24, 1991), His Holiness visited other churches of the city, where before his election to the Patriarchal See he was the ruling hierarch: the Trinity Cathedral of the St. Aleksandr Nevsky Lavra where he conducted a moleben at the reliquary of Orthodox Prince St. Aleksandr and a panikhida at the tomb of Metropolitan Grigory Chukov († February 5, 1955); the graves of St. Petersburg Metropolitans at the St. Nicholas Cemetery; the Dormition Podvorye of the Optina Hermitage (prior to 1917 it had been the Podvorye of the Kiev-Pechery Lavra, and in recent years there was an artificial ice skating-rink there); and, finally, the Church of the Smolensk Icon of the Mother of God at the Cemetery of the same name and the Chapel of St. Ksenia the Blessed of St. Petersburg where he conducted a moleben. On November 5,

eve of the Feast of the Icon of the Mother of God "Consolation of All the Afflicted", His Holiness officiated at All-Night Vigil at the Transfiguration Church.

The Russian Orthodox Church does not bind her existence today with any definite state system—be it democracy or monarchy. "The Church is in opposition under the conditions of any state system" — this is the 'golden formula' gained through much suffering by Patriarch St. Tikhon of All Russia. One should not, therefore, look for political aspects in the meetings of the Patriarch' with the head of the imperial family or, on the contrary, with a leader of a secular democratic movement. The Church sees its task in pastoral guidance of all Orthodox Russians irrespective of their political convictions. It is not fortuitous, therefore, that attending the service at the St. Isaac Cathedral were the Grand Prince and People's Deputies of democratic orientation. We may find both in the great past of Russia which it is our duty to study thoroughly. One cannot help agreeing with the words of Grand Prince Vladimir Kirillovich pronounced at the Piskarevskoye Cemetery the day after His Holiness the Patriarch left St. Petersburg: "The fact that the imperial capital was given back its name on November 7 testifies to the striving of Russia to return to its historical and spiritual roots wherein lies the success of all future ventures."

Ye. KOMAROV

The City of St. Peter

St. Petersburg... The name so familiar, but our ear is not accustomed to it yet. The colloquial abbreviation Peter—yes, but not the solemn, majestic St. Petersburg. We have to get used to it. Even Petersburgians often still use the old strange name (strange because formed not of the real name but of an alias), the “St.” in this German-Dutch combination, even for an unenlightened, would mean “saint”. But who? Peter I? Ever appearing monuments, monumental or verbal, meant for ages or for a moment, made people believe that men of state liked to honour with their names cities and towns, mountains and valleys. They did, but not Christians. Even the one stagnated in its arrogance bordering on impudence would not dare give his name to a city, but not that of his Heavenly Patron. Therefore, St. Petersburg is the city of St. Peter, the Chief Apostle. Of course there was a kind of claim in the name to a New Rome, to taking over the functions the “old Mother Moscow” allegedly failed to fulfil. But this humble claim had its grounds. Through Apostle St. Peter Our Lord Jesus Christ created the Church—*And I say also into thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church* so through the new capital (the corner stone) the young tsar intended to build a unique power, and he succeeded.

Petersburg was built at the time when walls and towers no longer saved the cities. But it still has the image of the fortress on its face. Even two fortresses. The first one a military fortress in all senses—is Petropavlovskaya on the Zayachy Ostrov in the centre of the city. It has all the appropriate attributes—water, walls, bastions, towers... It was never attacked or under a siege, it was a mark, a symbol of the city. But the most peculiar is that its main bastion is the church—the Church of St. Peter and Paul. And the second fortress of the city, its second bastion, always associated with its name, is the well-known St. Aleksandr Nevsky Lavra. It was founded by Peter I too. On the one side—a sword and shield, and on the other—protective cross, and between them, on both sides of the Nevsky Prospect, the main artery of St. Petersburg, lies the city itself. But there are peculiarities here too. The monastery, contrary to the old Russian tradition, was not built as a fortress. It has neither towers with loop-holes nor surrounding fortress walls. The strength of its spirit, shaded by the Holy Trinity Church, is protected by the Holy Trinity. It was here, not at Sts. Peter and Paul Church, that in 1724 the first Russian Emperor placed the holy relics of the warrior-defender of the Russian land, and here they were returned from the museum of religion and atheism by the then Metropolitan Aleksy of St. Petersburg and Novgorod a year before his election to the Patriarchal See.

In 1986 Metropolitan Aleksy accepted under his omophorion, besides the Estonian Diocese he administered, also St. Petersburg and Novgorod dioceses. One

of his first acts was the consecration of the neglected Chapel of Ksenia the Blessed of St. Petersburg at the Smolensk Cemetery, which miraculously withstood barbaric routs. We got used to it now: half-ruined churches are being restored, the shrines left intact are being returned. But six years ago, in the favourite phraseology of our press, it was “an act of civil courage” to solemnly praise an ascetic not yet canonized and what is more, forbidden and abused by the authorities. Upon his arrival in the city where Ksenia was secretly venerated, the city she helped and protected, the ruling hierarch could not help expressing his prayerful respect to the Righteous One and not merely as a private person, but in accordance with his lofty rank.

“You may get into trouble, if you lead a procession to the chapel,” some responsible person warned the Metropolitan.

“I haven’t got a helicopter at hand, and I cannot crawl, so I see no other way to get there,” was the calm reply Vladyka Aleksy gave the over-zealous official. And at the next Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, devoted to the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus, the Blessed Ksenia, together with eight other zealots, was canonized. The city on the Neva now has its own saint—a Petersburgian. Apostle Peter is the Patron of the entire Christian Church, the Orthodox Prince St. Aleksandr Nevsky is a Patron of all Russia, its north-western lands in particular, but the Blessed Ksenia belongs to the city, she is close and dear, she walked these streets, she visited these homes, she helped to build this Church of the Smolensk Icon of the Mother of God.

Vladyka Aleksy headed the St. Petersburg See for four years. The number of churches functioning in the city doubled over the period. Church life in the dioceses under his rule strengthened. And it is remarkable that the Local Council which made Metropolitan Aleksy Patriarch, canonized the Righteous Ioann of Kronshtadt, another man of prayer and Patron of Russia and of St. Petersburg.

Originally St. Petersburg had no local saint or shrines. Just St. Aleksandr Nevsky brought from Vladimir, to the site of his martial feats. Moscow had her saints of God and miracle-working icons were brought there from all over the country. St. Petersburg, dividing the honour of being the capital with its elder sister, took upon itself state functions while Moscow was made the keeper of the Orthodox spirit: the Moscow Kremlin was still the heart of the country, the enthronization of the Russian tsar took place at the All-Russian Cathedral of the Dormition of the Mother of God. At the end of its hundred years of existence Ksenia was glorified in St. Petersburg, but locally, quietly, among her own, almost two hundred years before the general recognition. Also glorified and also in his lifetime was the dean of the Kronshtadt Cathedral, Ioann

Sergiev, but not only locally but all over Russia and beyond its bounds. But him too the teomachist power tried to take away from the believers, slandered his memory, closed the monastery on the Karpovka River he had founded, where he was buried. Desecrated was the Church of the Icon "Consolation of All the Afflicted" on the Neva where an Icon of the Theotokos glorified on July 23, 1888 was kept. The famous cathedrals of the city—of St. Isaac and of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, built to mark the victory over Napoleon, were made museums. The holy relics of St. Aleksandr Nevsky were expropriated. And finally to complete spiritual destruction and oblivion, and drive away heavenly patrons, the name of the city itself was stolen. Only Nevsky Prospect, after three abortive attempts, remained Nevsky—after all neutral—the name of the river, just a hint at the Orthodox Prince.

On the 74th anniversary of the October Revolution of sad memory, the day of the city was celebrated, the city of St. Peter, of St. Petersburg that regained its name. And Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, the former ruling bishop of the city, the son of its residents, came to mark the event. The schedule of his three-day visit was eloquent: the St. Aleksandr Nevsky Lavra where His Holiness prayed at the reliquary of the Orthodox Prince; the recently returned Church of the Icon "Consolation of All the Afflicted", on the day of the feast of the icon—Divine Liturgy in St. Ioann's

on the Karpovka, where the Patriarch consecrated the Chapel of St. Ioann of Kronshtadt, the founder of the monastery; All-Night Vigils in the Cathedrals of St. Isaac and of the Transfiguration; moleben at the Chapel of St. Ksenia the Blessed; visit to the Optina Hermitage Podvorye; meetings with the clergy, Grand Prince Vladimir Kirillovich Romanov, city authorities and the public... Through his prayers and using his influence His Holiness strove to return to the city its original name as well as its saints and shrines and could not help sharing his joy with the residents.

God cannot be abused. He may not prevent our madness, but solely for the sake of our salvation, so that after looking into the abyss the wayward humanity might shudder and repent and would again strive for light and joy. And we are already given back the joys: the righteous are recognized as righteous, the cupolas are being crowned with crosses, original names are being returned to our cities and streets. And what about us? Are we returning to the image of God? What is it going on—infatuation with the retro style or genuine regeneration? What kind of freedom are we looking for: freedom for sin or radiant vainless joy sanctified by the Lord? Will the joy of Divine love come back and take root in our souls? For, as the Righteous St. Ioann of Kronshtadt said, "Christ is peace, freedom of the soul, light ineffable".

Aleksandr PARMENOV

St. Petersburg's Prayerful Intercessor

Sincerity, love, non-self-seeking kindness in all times have puzzled people as something extraordinary, beyond the commonly accepted order of things, and arose suspicion and idle talk. Behind the deep, inner feeling the evil rumour sought to find something more accessible to understanding, some trivial motives and causes.

It was not given to most of her contemporaries to understand St. Ksenia the Blessed of St. Petersburg, who was recognized as zealot of piety in the 18th century and canonized by the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in June 1988.

The earthly path of this modest, nonconspicuous woman who seemed simple or even crazy (probably through misfortunes that fell to her lot) turned into the fulfilment of Gospel commandments behested to us by Christ: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind... Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* (Mt. 22, 37, 39).

Ksenia the Blessed was born in St. Petersburg at the beginning of the 18th century. When she was 26 her husband, Andrei Fyodorovich, died suddenly. The young widow of the colonel gave away all her possessions, put on her beloved husband's clothes and left her home for good. She wanted to be spared

tactless questions, vain curiosity, and false sympathy with the sole aim of hiding from everyone her innermost striving—to make her life a continuous travel towards her beloved with a prayer on her lips (can we even dream of a meeting crowning our life's journey if we do not believe in Life Eternal?). And all the while she was serving people to her last breath. She left the world, but she was always among people, helping them, saving them, loving them.

Is it really possible you might ask, to bury a husband, and then, for 45 years, without a roof over one's head, to walk the streets of St. Petersburg bringing joy and love to alien people? What might seem strange and unattainable to us, for her was simple and natural. And there was not a hint of tragedy or tears in all that—she was filled with joy, radiance and love, and all who lived in St. Petersburg at the time considered the visit of this grace-giving woman to one's house a great happiness.

Wherein does the mystery lie?

In faith! Live with God and in God is light and love, and everyone around sees and feels it, and is always drawn to the source of this light. And the Blessed Ksenia loved people with such ardour and prayed for them so zealously that the Lord, through her prayers, helped and is now helping people,

granting Divine mercy to the desperate who lost all hope. They were waiting for Ksenia, and are waiting for her now.

Mothers rejoiced when Ksenia would come to the cradle or kiss the baby. They knew and believed that a sick child will invariably be healed through her prayers. At the sight of her they all hurried to her with the children pleading her to bestow a blessing or just touch a baby's head.

Ksenia displayed especial concern over families. She wanted to protect the spouses against the every-day vain bustle, falls and misfortune. Her heart filled with love, Ksenia strove to make residents of St. Petersburg happy. Possessing the gift of foresight, she was always amidst the afflicted, warding off grief and trouble, pleading God to send down joy and peace.

So the days passed. There were insults and mockery. But Ksenia the Blessed endured them without murmur, with Christian humbleness making the evil souls humble.

At night she would leave the city and pray in the fields, hiding from people. When the construction of the church at the Smolensk Cemetery began, Ksenia, secretly, under cover of night, helped the masons: she laboured till day break carrying the bricks and piling them on the scaffolding. Workers were surprised very much when every morning they saw the work of the unknown helper. They decided to see it, and found out that the hard man's work had been done by a fragile woman...

"By false madness thou censured the madness of the

world, by humbleness of the Cross thou acquired the strength of the Lord," the Holy Church sings in praise of Ksenia the Blessed. Indeed, negligent of what she might eat or where she might sleep, censuring the madness of this world—the world of vanity, lust and grubbing, Ksenia carried to the people the gift of charity, which according to the Apostle, *seeketh not her own, envieth not, thinketh no evil, suffereth long, and is kind* (1 Cor. 13, 4-5).

At the start of the 19th century Ksenia the Blessed passed away unto the Lord. She was buried at the Smolensk Cemetery in St. Petersburg, where she had helped to build the church. People constantly flocked to her grave to ask for help and took a handful of ground as a memento so the grave mound soon disappeared, and a new one was made. But it was melting too. The miracles worked through the prayers of Ksenia the Blessed never ceased. Her veneration grew. It was therefore decided to build a chapel over the grave. The chapel with a marble iconostasis and tomb was built in 1902 on donations of those who venerated Ksenia.

Our St. Petersburg prayerful intercessor gave people joy and peace in the course of all her earthly life, she is granting joy and peace also to those who appeal to her in prayer now. The Chapel of St. Ksenia is a quiet abode of the heart shunning the bustle of life, and people are flocking here in incessant stream with love and gratitude to the one who intercedes for us before the Lord.

Irina SIDORINA

From the Sermons Delivered by His Holiness Patriarch ALEKSY

Sermon after the moleben at the Chapel of St. Ksenia the Blessed of St. Petersburg.

The residents of the city of Apostle St. Peter flocked to this holy place in the crucial days of the blockade and in post-war years when the chapel was closed: people's faith always brought here hundreds and thousands of people who wrote on its walls and squeezed into closed windows and doors appeals for prayer, help, intercession of St. Ksenia the Blessed. Then the chapel was opened, but soon militant atheists interfered and it was closed again. It was only in 1987 that it was renovated for divine service.

Today too, we believe that St. Ksenia the Blessed is praying and interceding for us all. If we are worthy of her prayers, we will be given blessed help here as our compatriots have been over scores of years already. May St. Ksenia the Blessed fortify us in hardships we have to overcome today and in those in store for us. We believe that through the prayers of our Russian saints the Lord will help us to stand the trials that fall to our lot.

From the sermon after the divine service at St. Isaac Cathedral on November 6, 1991.

Your Eminences, Your Graces, Esteemed Anatoly Aleksandrovich, Mayor of St. Petersburg, Esteemed Gavriil Kharitonovich, Mayor of Moscow, Your Highnesses, honourable fathers, dear brothers and sisters,

It is a remarkable day in the life of our city: the original name is being returned to it, it is again acquiring its Heavenly Patron in the person of St. Peter.

Gathered in this majestic church today, we prayed to the Holy Apostles so that they, the powerful, may support us in our weaknesses, give us strength and courage to overcome the trials. Let us cultivate in ourselves goodness and mercy—the virtues that testify to the fact that we are the real followers of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, of His Apostles.

The words of Metropolitan Veniamin of Petrograd the Confessor and Martyr († 1922) come to mind today: "The greatest grief and sorrow are division and enmity, but I still believe that Rus will be united." Let us believe that the words are prophetic! Let us believe that only in accord will all temptations be overcome. Let us believe that this day will be the starting point of regeneration of spirituality, culture and humanness in our city.

Archimandrite IAKOV Panchuk Nominated and Consecrated Bishop of Pochaev, Vicar of the Ternopol Diocese

By the decision of the Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of November 27, 1990, Archimandrite Iakov Panchuk was designated Bishop of Pochaev, Vicar of the Ternopol Diocese and, at the same time, Father Superior of the Pochaev Lavra of the Dormition.

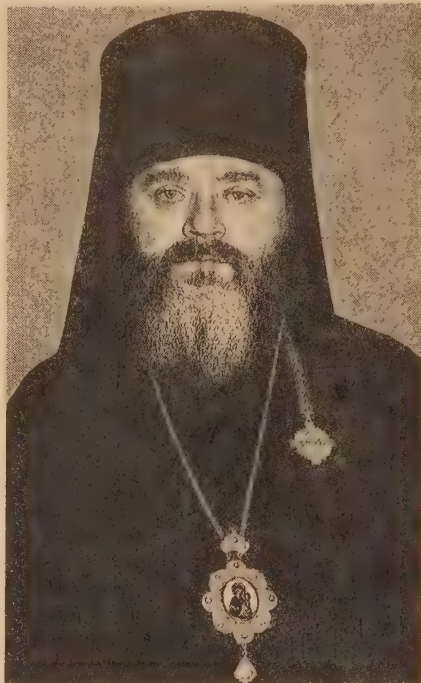
On December 13, 1990, after All-Night Vigil at Kiev's Cathedral of St. Vladimir, the office of nomination of Archimandrite Iakov as Bishop of Pochaev was conducted by Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev and Galicia, Patriarchal Exarch of All the Ukraine; bishops Ionafan of Pereyaslav-Khmel'nitsky, Vasily of Kirovograd and Nikolaev, and Gleb of Dniepropetrovsk and Zaporozhiye.

On December 14, 1990, the Feast of St. Filaret the Merciful, during Divine Liturgy celebrated in Kiev's Cathedral of St. Vladimir the hierarchs, who had taken part in the office of nomination, consecrated Archimandrite Iakov Bishop of Pochaev, vicar of the Ternopol Diocese.

* * *

Bishop Iakov (secular name Ivan Dmitrievich Panchuk) was born into a peasant family on October, 5, 1931.

After finishing secondary school, he served in the army from 1952 to 1955. Upon demobilization became a postulant in the Pochaev Lavra of



the Dormition. In 1957 entered the Leningrad Theological Seminary. On October 29, 1958, was professed in the Pochaev Lavra with the name of Iakov in honour of St. James the Apostle. On December 4 of the same year he was ordained hierodeacon in the Lavra by Archbishop Pallady Kaminsky of Lvov and Ternopol († 1978), and on November 19, 1961, Metropolitan Gury Yegorov of Leningrad and Ladoga († 1965) ordained him hieromonk. After finishing the Leningrad Theological Seminary in 1962 he entered the Leningrad Theo-

logical Academy, which he graduated from in 1966 with the scholarly degree of Candidate of Theology conferred upon him for his treatise "Contemplative and Active Life According to the Teaching of Holy Zealots of Faith and Piety".

Fulfilled various obediences in the Pochaev Lavra of the Dormition: a librarian, head chorister, precentor, superintendent dean... In 1969 was raised to the dignity of hegumen.

By the ukase of His Holiness Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia († 1990) of August 8, 1974, was appointed Father Superior of the Pochaev Lavra and elevated to the dignity of archimandrite.

In 1976, for the Feast of Holy Easter, was awarded the right to wear a second ornamented cross.

In 1978, during the Holy and Easter weeks, visited the Holy Mount Athos with a group of pilgrims, and in 1979, on the Feast of the Holy Trinity, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

In 1983 was appointed Father Confessor at the Krasnogorsk Convent in the town of Zolotonosha, Cherkassy Region. On April 29, 1985, was appointed rector of the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin in the city of Cherkassy, Kiev Diocese. Simultaneously he was acting superintendent dean of the Cherkassy Church District and Father Confessor of the Kiev Convent of the Dormition.

Has been decorated with Orders of the Jerusalem and Rumanian Orthodox Churches.

Bishop LEV of Novgorod

Spiritual Revival

Today, after many decades, we can pray before the miracle-working icon of the Mother of God "The Sign". In spite of the fact that all these years the icon has been outside the Church, on its feast day faithful Novgorodians gathered in the Church of St. Philip the Apostle to turn with prayers to the Most Pure Mother of God. And although the God's flock was not numerical at that time, the faithful prayed, beseeching the Lord to illumine all people with true light. On that day many faithful Novgorodians went to the city museum where "The Sign" Icon of the Mother of God was kept, to pray inwardly before it.

The prayer did reach the Lord, and God's words: "Ask and it shall be given you" have come true. After much petitioning the miracle-working icon, and, together with it, this ancient cathedral dedicated to St. Sophia, the Wisdom of God, were returned to the Church, and on August 16, the Feast Day of St. Antony the Roman, the Miracle Worker of Novgorod, the cathedral was consecrated by hierarchs and clergymen headed by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey II. For the first time after many decades Divine Liturgy was celebrated in front of the Icon of the Mother of God "The Sign".

What has brought us to the St. Sophia Cathedral today? And what thoughts and mood have we come with to the Mother of God in this church? Just as many centuries ago at the times of danger threatening the city Novgorodians turned to the Most Pure Mother of God beseeching Her protection and asking Her to stop the internecine strife; after their common prayers, the Most Pure Mother of God granted Her grace—the city was saved. Eight centuries ago Prince Andrei Bogolyubsky set off at the head of his many-thousand-strong force against Novgorod in order to ravage it—the Lord gave this trial to the city, too. After a common sincere prayer, led by Archbishop Ioann of Novgorod, this icon was brought to the fortress wall, and Novgorodians appealed to the Most Pure for help. According to the available sources, only four hundred defenders of the city were pitted against the attacking force of four thousand warriors. And the Mother of God hearkened to the people's prayers for help. As the chronicler writes, during the battle an arrow struck at the face of the Most Pure, and the icon turned to face the city which fact greatly impressed both the defending and the attacking forces. The enemy retreated in fear. The four hundred defenders pursued the many-thousand-strong enemy.

Thus, fear for their own fate and the fate of the city and its residents forced Novgorodians to appeal to the Most Pure Mother of God. And today we have come to this church with a prayer to the Most Pure Mother of God, with a cry for the fate of everyone of us, with a cry for the land of Russia. We experience dangerous times. Such times are not new in the history of our state, and miracle-working icons of the Most Pure Mother of God are closely associated with them. During the defence of Novgorod there was the appearance of "The Sign" icon, before the Battle on the Kulikovo Plain—that of the Don Icon of the Mother of God. Blessed with the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, the Russian troops drove Poles out of Moscow. During the Battle of Borodino the whole of the Russian army, headed by M. Kutuzov, prayed before the Smolensk Icon of the Mother of God. Eyewitnesses testify that during the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945—*Tr.*), before the battle of Moscow and the breaching of the Leningrad blockade, the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God was carried round the troops and the entire fighting front. Hardly had some thirty years passed since the time when the people, who had rejected the name of God, turned away from Him and decided to build a just and happy society without God's help, and the whole nation appealed to the Most Pure

Oration delivered by Bishop Lev of Novgorod and Staraya Russa in the Novgorod St. Sophia Cathedral on December 10, 1991, the feast day of the Mother of God Icon "The Sign".

Mother of God, seeking Her protection. Why? Because the people got to realize that no heroic efforts and no sacrifice, without God's name, could lead to a victory over the enemy.

Today we inwardly admit to ourselves and to each other that back in 1917 we engaged in an Utopia, attempting to build a happy society without any moral principles, basing it on the idea of theomachism, and ultimately finding ourselves in a dead end. Today we are turning to God. We talk a great deal of spiritual revival, unfortunately not always properly understanding what it really is. They begin to tell us that spiritual revival means our rich culture, our writers and artists, and man's inner freedom. We heard this as schoolchildren and later as grownups, when we were told about an inner spiritual world built on anything but spiritual basis. Spiritual revival or rebirth means acquisition of spirit inside oneself, man's preparation to turn his body into a temple for the Holy Ghost. Spiritual rebirth means drawing nearer to God, reconciliation with Him, conclusion of man's covenant with God transgressed by us. Yes, our culture is rich, but we should remember that it has always been based and continues to be based on Christian values. When we talk about spiritual rebirth, we have in mind our road to Truth. We follow it and try to understand what has happened to us, to embark on the road of repentance, not the one we often formally resort to, confessing our sins and transgressions, but on the road of reforming our life and, through it, on the road of reconciliation with God. And if we do not follow the example of our fellow countrymen, who in the hour of danger for the Russian land turned to God, if we do not appeal tearfully as ancient Novgorodians did: "The Most Holy Mother of God, save us", then, believe me, no theories, no words and doctrines will help us to overcome this predicament. Let us not be madmen. Let us tempt not our destinies and the destinies of our children. We are like the people of ancient Israel who were moaning in captivity and trying to find a way out. To achieve liberation from captivity all sorts of sages called for revolutions and riots, but it was all in vain. And it was only the voice of God, which sounded through Moses the Prophet of God and many other pious people, that awakened consciousness in people. This call of God enlightened man's heart and mind and indicated that liberation from captivity would be gained through universal repentance. The Egyptian captivity was God's punishment for betrayal of God, for transgression of the vow and the alliance concluded between God and man. Through repentance the people of Israel freed themselves from the Egyptian captivity. But when they were to show patience and hope that the Lord, Who enabled them to safely cross the Red Sea, will help them in coming trials, too, they began to murmur again, and again yielded to diabolical temptation.

The Hebrews went about the promised land for forty years like blind men, not knowing where to go. It was only after the entire generation, which sinned against God, had died out, did the Lord lead the whole people into the promised land. And today we are like this Old-Testament Hebrew people. For seventy odd years we have been wandering in search of a happy life, for seventy years odd we have been blinded by hatred and enmity towards each other, for seventy years odd we have been engaged in theomachism. At all cross-roads we have been trying to prove to each other that there is no God. Having come to where we are now, should we look for those guilty? We, all of us, are guilty. If we do not follow the example of the Old-Testament people of Israel, if we do not follow the pious example of our forefathers, happiness will flee from us. Today everyone of us has been inwardly praying to God, the Most Pure Mother of God, beseeching the Lord to ward off trouble, to enable us to start a new, happy life.

Mind you, my dear, that a happy life begins here, in this church. A new life will begin when we appeal to God with one heart and one mouth, when our spirituality will be genuine, when we banish evil thoughts from our hearts, when we stop charming our ears by false teachings and new delusions. A great deal is being offered to us today, but precious are the words said by the Lord to His apostles: *take up the cross and follow Me*. This following the Saviour is a road leading to eternity, to happiness. This is not a wide and smooth road, but a road of sorrows, the road of patience, the road of repentance. We must enter deliverance through narrow gates. And before we leave this church, let us appeal to the Mother of God to beseech Her Son, our Saviour, to ward off the impending disaster, to enlighten our hearts by the light of His teaching, so that through this light of Christ, our hearts may be illumined by Christ's peace and joy. When we gain this peace of Christ we shall stop turning around and saying: everyone is guilty but myself. I myself will say to God and people: I am the one who is guilty above all of what has happened; I have sinned, my Lord. When we understand this,

we shall become true Christians. Then we shall be entitled to say that the Lord abides in our hearts. We shall then look at the world through different eyes, we shall have a different attitude to those trials, and with Christ in our hearts will find a way out of this difficult situation. All our good undertakings and ventures, dear brothers and sisters, will meet with no success until we obtain God's blessing. It is not fortuitous that ancient colours bore the inscription: "God is with us."

When God will be with us, then God's blessing will be upon everyone of us and upon society as a whole. Amen.

On the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The Gospel lesson of the day is the Parable of the Publican and the Pharisee, the content of which is well known to all. However, in order to understand better the reasons which made the Pharisee speak so hypocritically of his own merits, and for the publican to repent humbly of his sins, we must go back to the times preceding the spread of the Gospel teachings among the inhabitants of ancient Palestine.

One must recall that, in the history of the Jewish people, there was a time when alien influence predominated and they were facing the danger of not only losing their independence, but the fundamentals of dogma. Less than 200 years before the Birth of Christ the Jewish lands were conquered by the Syrian King Antiochus Epiphanes, who started the destruction of the national and religious origins of God's Chosen People and who attempted to force on the people of Palestine pagan laws, customs and faith. A great majority of the Chosen People forgot the traditions of their forefathers, transgressed the Law, and began speaking a foreign language.

At this time when the Law and national customs were being forgotten there appeared pious men deeply devoted to their faith and loving their country. They set themselves the goal of withstanding all temptations and of observing strictly the Law given to them by Moses and the Prophets, the ancient paternal traditions and customs, the purity of morals and the language of their country. These men were known as "pharisees", that is to say, "the chosen ones", differing from others. Their number increased rapidly; they nurtured in the people love of their own land, urged them to fight for their freedom from the foreign yoke and for the preservation of their identity. When the leaders of the Maccabees rose up against the alien king, the Pharisees joined them and stood in the ranks of those fighting for their faith and independence. Subsequently they became strict preservers of the

truths, denouncing even kings and priests who deviated from the faith of their fathers. The Holy Church commemorates the names of Simeon the Receiver of God, Nicodemus who talked with Jesus Christ, and Joseph of Arimathea who had buried the body of the Lord taken down from the Cross on Golgotha. They were all righteous and pious men who awaited the imminent arrival of the Kingdom of God on earth.

And how did it come to pass that such pious men, courageous defenders of the faith, were replaced by Pharisees whom the Lord Jesus Christ denounced as hypocrites, vainglorious and enemies of righteousness? The fact is that by the time of the Saviour's arrival on earth the persecution of the faithful had ceased in Palestine, the times of confessors and martyrs had ended. But the Pharisees who were accustomed to honour and respect, wanted to keep their spiritual influence. Gradually the spirit of faith and inner piety weakened in them, they became involved in ritualism and the fulfilment of secondary injunctions. Upon entering the synagogue they took their places in front appearing to be praying profoundly. And in the end many of them possessed only apparent piety—they had lost their faith in God, love of their neighbour, and purity of heart, merely boasting of how strictly they observed the rites. The Gospel lesson today speaks precisely of this type of Pharisee.

The Pharisees, adherents to the Mosaic Law, who fulfilled strictly every injunction of the Law, were looked upon as holy and God-pleasing men and they considered themselves righteous, not like others. Their exaltation became the reason why the Pharisees paid no attention to the sermons of John the Baptist on repentance, nor to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

The Pharisee spoken of in the Gospel parable was upon a certain step of spiritual development. He was good, did not commit big sins. He was even aware that his prosperity was due to God and thanked Him. However, it is not to his own advantage that he rose to this rather lofty moral

level. The trouble was that because of his self-satisfaction he had stopped in his ascension.

In the sight of men he was righteous, but not in God's. He had nothing to aspire to or to ask God about. This Pharisee only praised and thanked God for having raised him above all other men, that he was not like others. The secret of his own unawakened soul was still hidden from him. Pharisaism is the condition when man considers himself better than others, is comforted by assessing highly his false righteousness. That is why it was quite natural for the Pharisee to judge his neighbour. This is unavoidable when love ceases and in its place comes condemnation and disdain of people. Self-satisfaction blinds a man, he becomes content with his external successes and thinks of the number of good deeds accomplished by him and not of love of God and his neighbour. The Pharisee pointed out virtues—fasting twice a week and giving his tithes to the poor, forgetting that God requires from us love above all, and that good deeds are necessary in order to kindle and warm our hearts with love of Him and one's neighbour.

Let us now turn to the other person in the Gospel parable and say a few words about the publican who manifested sincere repentance and humility. It is well known that in ancient Palestine the publicans or tax gatherers in their profession had resorted to violence, cunning and untruth. Having paid their Roman masters, they used every means to return the money with profit. It is understandable that such men were hated by the people of God and regarded as tools of foreign masters. And naturally there was no greater sinner in the sight of the common man than the publican.

Sometimes the universal disdain moved some of the publicans to deep and sincere repentance. The Gospel tells us of more than one repentant publican; it is not by chance that publicans were among the zealous servants of John the Baptist and among Christ's nearest disciples, about one of whom, Zacchaeus, the Lord said: *He also is a son of Abraham* (Lk. 19.9). However, the biblical publican was not always hard-hearted. He had had a bright youth, but the work he accepted, disproportionate to his powers, lulled his conscience and he lived in a state of sin until God's grace touched him and revealed to him the abyss of sin into which he had fallen and roused in him deep sorrow for sins committed as clearly manifested during his contrition in the temple.

By his words coming from the depths of his heart: *God be merciful to me a sinner* (Lk. 18.13), he expressed admission of his sins, grief at his unfortunate state, and sincere desire to change his way of life. This is that prayer which justifies one who pronounces it with a clear conscience. The publican did not speak of his good deeds, like the Pharisee, only trusted in God's mercy.

And when he asked for God's mercy, without having any apparent grounds for doing so, he thereby confessed his faith in the infinite mercy of God and in that grace which justifies and saves a sinner, and which regenerates and leads man to do good. The publican's prayer was a prayer of contrition and humility and at the same time of faith and hope.

And each of us can ask himself the question: Is it possible that the good deeds accomplished by the Pharisee did not justify but condemned him? In answering this question it should be said that it would be incompatible with the mercifulness of the Saviour and His all-forgiving grace. Indeed, the Lord Who so sharply denounced the Pharisees on other occasions, in this parable does not directly condemn one of them, but only places him with his false piety far lower than the publican: *I tell you, this man [publican] went down to his house justified rather than the other [Pharisee]* (Lk. 18.14). These words relate not only to the self-satisfied Pharisee, but to many of us who are beginning today the period of repentance in Holy Quadragesima.

And, indeed, how many devout people there are who think, in the simplicity of their hearts, that the observance of external piety is piety itself. One must not censure them but only wish them to acquire what they lack in their souls—turn their external piety into internal, master the spirit of piety, which consists of worshipping God, of loving one's neighbour, and of the purity of heart. For external piety does not touch the heart, does not correct vices, nor make men better. *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees...*, the Lord says, *even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity* (Mt. 23. 27, 28).

It is known that fasting is an effective means of repentance, but given only its outward observance all its value is lost. The Saviour tells us: *When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast* (Mt. 6.16). The outer marks of humility will appear by themselves, when they rise in our hearts, and this will become possible only when we stop praising our own virtues.

Strict observance of fast during Holy Quadragesima is indivisibly bound with constant repentance, regrettably this is so often performed by us only formally. The greatest of Christian righteous men never ceased to their death to weep over their weaknesses and sins, to fear the judgement of God, and never considered themselves righteous in God's sight. And we, starting an inner dialogue with our conscience, often remember in our human weakness only our good deeds and try to forget the bad. However, in regarding your good deeds sincerely ask yourself: Have they

always proceeded from good intentions? Was it reverence for the Lord's commandments or only good manners that stopped us from performing many evil acts? Was it sincere love of one's neighbour or only a secret desire for gratitude that made us come to their aid? And if we mentally put aside all the good deeds performed for the sake of vanity, in what state shall we appear before the righteous judgement of God?

And why do we repent so many times and sin again? Because, like the Pharisee, we compare ourselves not with pious ascetics who were filled with faith, but with our neighbour who is filled with worldly vanities, and not discerning in ourselves his bigger sins, we feel self-satisfied and comforted. Self-satisfaction arises when nothing is required from one but specific outside deeds. We are drawing nearer to Lent, a time of fervent repentance. We shall fast and stand through long divine services and precisely at this time there may rise in our hearts the danger of self-satisfaction, which was characteristic of the Pharisee and which may easily turn into the sin of pride. We must constantly bear in mind this danger since pride is the mother of all sins. Pride cast the Angel into the abyss, it also destroyed our forefathers who wanted to be equal to God.

To act like the Pharisee and judge others is to anticipate God's Judgement. At times we see a sinner and condemn him, but do we know how many tears he had shed before God for his sins? And if he had sincerely repented then he is nearer to God than we, for repentance and humility are the way to Christ, while pride and censure take us away from Him. But there is another danger lying in wait for believers who, living in the world, have specific difficulties in fulfilling the instructions for Holy Quadragesima. These people fall into another extremity when they assert that the modern way of life justifies deviation from many of the instructions in early piety, allegedly impossible of fulfilment in our days. Hence there may arise the wrong idea that the main thing is the inner process of repentance and all the outer manifestations are only an unnecessary formality. Regrettably in these days there are more and more such people, and at times these present-day publicans praise and exalt themselves above those pious Christians, whom they consider Pharisees for following the rule. Therefore, in taking now the path of spiritual ascension, which leads us through Lent and Holy Week to the Radiant Resurrection of Christ, let us be careful in our judgements so that succeeding in one thing we might not make a mistake in another.

During All-Night Vigil on the eve of Lent, for the first time this year, there rang out under the vaults of the church the old hymn: "O Life-Giver, open the doors of repentance to me." This canticle, by which the Holy Church prepares us for Lent, reminds us of the early pious ascetics.

When one of them wanted to retire from a life of vanity and devote himself to secluded monastic life, he approached meekly a monastery and knocked upon its closed door. He was asked from behind the lattice: "What do you seek and what do you desire?", "I wish to repent of my sins under the roof of the holy cloister," he replied. Then followed a lengthy dialogue: the seeker after the holy life begged for refuge, but the brethren of the monastery refused and advised him to consider well taking into account the difficulties of ascetic life. And only after this lengthy test when they became convinced of the firm resolution of the new postulant, was the gate of the cloister opened to him. Thus too must we stand now by the gate of Holy Quadragesima, knock on the door of God's mercy and pray to be admitted among the penitents.

Holy Quadragesima is for us a peaceful cloister to which we go to lay down our burden of sorrows and cares and find a calm refuge for our souls. But, regrettably, the majority of us are not like the postulants of old. They persistently begged with tears to be taken into the monastery, but today the Holy Church urges and asks us, but we listen to her indifferently and in most of us there rises a feeling of sadness and not of joy at the approach of Lent.

Let us pray that the Lord Himself might open to us the hidden secrets of our hearts; let us renounce false righteousness and stand with the publican by the church gate, turn our gaze upon our own sins and fall, upon our own guilt before God and men, and together with the publican cry from the bottom of our hearts: *God be merciful to me a sinner*. And only then we may hope that the Lord will grant us to see through the holy and salvific days of Lent, so that we might all "with one mouth and one mind" cry to Him: "O Life-Giver, open to us the doors of repentance." Amen.

Archimandrite AVGUSTIN,
docent at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy

Sermon on the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Beloved in the Lord venerable fathers, brothers and sisters! Today, the Holy Orthodox Church, preparing you for the great feast of the Nativity of Christ, solemnly honours the holy forefathers.

What are these holy forefathers? They are righteous men who lived on earth centenaries and even millennia before the coming of Christ, the Son of God, to the world. The holy forefathers were men just as we are (cf.: Jas. 5.17), but their life was illumined by the great faith in the coming Redeemer of the world. They saw better than all their contemporaries how evil, iniquity and injustice were being multiplied on earth, how the true faith in God was being smothered by evil faith and idolatry, and how people, forgetting their Maker and transgressing His holy commandments, were increasingly sliding into the abyss of sin and despair.

Amidst the terrible disintegration, and lechery, the holy forefathers, like beacons, illumined the world with the light of faith in the coming Saviour of the world. With their sagacious eyes they saw the day when the *Seed of the Woman*—the Lord Christ—*shall bruise thy head*, the head of the mankiller the serpent (Gen. 3.15) and rejoiced to see this day (cf: Jn. 8.56). With their prophetic eyes they saw Christ, the Son of God, suffering on the cross, and spoke about the coming redemption as of something already accomplished: *...he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed* (Is. 53.5).

With hope for salvation the holy forefathers looked forward to the fulfilment of all God's promises and by their waiting for the Redeemer of the world inspired other people to preserve the true faith, to live according to faith and to overcome by faith all sorrows, misfortunes and temptations of the sinful world.

As heroes and zealots of faith the holy forefathers suffered for its sake all kind of privations, even martyrdom. They were despised, banished, stoned and condemned to the stake. Not infrequently the streets of Jerusalem were covered with the blood of the forefathers-martyrs sent by God. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee* (Mt. 23.37), the Saviour Himself said about them. The holy forefathers endured all hardships because they believed in God and *desired a better country, that is, an heavenly* (Heb. 11. 16).

By faith forefather Abraham was ready to offer up his only begotten son Isaac (cf.: Heb. 11. 17). By his offering he presaged the Golgotha

Sacrifice. By faith David vanquished Goliath and freed the people from the aliens. By faith Daniel and three youngsters—Hananiah, Azariah and Mishael—gained the upper hand of king Nebuchadnezzar and refused to worship an idol in the land of Babylon. For their faith in the only true God the three young men were cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace, but the Lord subdued the flame. The cruel torturers, who stood far from the furnace, were consumed by fire, whereas the young men sang a hymn in praise of God amidst the flame.

It is by faith that all holy forefathers lived, *who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens* (Heb. 11.33-34).

Fortified by faith, St. Gideon the Righteous, whose memory we now festively observe together with the holy fathers, glorified by the Church of Christ, turned the armies of enemies-idolaters to flight.

When he was still a very young man, St. Gideon the Righteous got the favour of God, who placed him as a judge over the people of God. His fellow-tribesmen were in distress: they were surrounded by numerous idolaters—the Medianites, cruel and depraved people, who sought to exterminate faith and the entire people of St. Gideon the Righteous.

But at the time of severe trials, when the glorious and strong fled away, the righteous man was unexpectedly commanded by an Angel of God to go and save his people. God-fearing and humble Gideon replied to this command: *O my Lord, wherewith shall I save. Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house* (Judgs. 6. 15). And the Lord said unto Gideon: *Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man* (Judgs. 6. 14, 16). The righteous man obeyed the command of his Lord. Heartened by amazing signs of the Divine might and fortified by heavenly aid, forefather Gideon took a handful of almost unarmed warriors and set off against the many-thousand-strong host of aliens. With a victorious battle-cry *The sword of the Lord, and of Gedeon* (Judgs. 7. 18) he and the three hundred of his men made the host of aliens flee.

Just as other forefathers, by his faith St. Gideon the Righteous testified that the salvation of all people is in the promised Deliverer of the world alone. The miraculous Nativity of Christ—the Saviour of the world, transformed the sign chosen by Gideon the Righteous himself. To become

stronger in his faith and convinced of the fact that the Angel's command was the command of God, Gideon the Righteous asked God that dew be only on the fleece of wool he would put on the ground, and that it be dry upon all the earth besides. On the next night he wanted that it be dry only upon the fleece and that there be dew on all the ground. And it was so: the Lord showed the sign of His Grace to Gideon the Righteous and worked a miracle for his faith (Jgs. 6. 36-40).

This sign was a prototype of the salvation of the entire human race through God's incarnation. The animate fleece—the Virgin Mother of God—was abundantly endowed with God's grace, whereas in expectation of the Redeemer's coming, the world was drying up from the baneful heat of superstition and idolatry. Just as Gideon's fleece of wool remained dry whereas the ground around was covered with dew, so after the Nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ the Virgin Mother of God did not change and the entire earth was moistened with the dew of true faith.

With the sword of faith St. Gideon the Righteous protected his people from hunger, poverty, depravity, idolatry and complete extermination. His faith brought down heavenly grace upon all people of God. He did not refuse from his calling and did not say: "No, the Lord, I will not go, I shall not be able to do anything from what has been commanded by Thee." He believed that if the Lord gave a promise He was sure to keep it. St. Paul the Apostle praised the faith of

forefather Gideon (Heb. 11. 32), naming him among the great Old Testament men—keepers of the faith in the coming Saviour of the world.

The holy forefathers prevailed over all sinful temptations of the world. Their victory was *the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith* (1 Jn. 5. 4). Faith leads to immortality. Faith leads to God. As we, beloved in the Lord brothers and sisters, ponder over the life and demise of our holy forefathers, let us, too, imitate their faith.

Let us pray, beseeching the Lord to multiply and strengthen our faith. What good will it do if we call ourselves religious people, while doing bad and evil? Therefore we should believe and build our lives according to faith. May the Lord grant that we, our children and our grandchildren keep our holy Orthodox faith, love the Holy Orthodox Church, always confirm ourselves in faith and strive for peace on earth.

Small wonder, therefore, beloved in the Lord venerable fathers, brothers and sisters, that it is precisely today that the Holy Church prayerfully remembers the holy forefathers. They waited for the coming of the Saviour and Redeemer of the world, and we are waiting for the great feast of the Nativity of Christ. They obtained justification through faith, and we are praying to God, beseeching Him to enable us by faith in Christ to reach and bow to Divine Infant Christ Who is to be born on earth.

Meet Christ coming down from heaven! Amen.

Metropolitan GEDEON of Stavropol and Baku

REFLECTIONS OF A PASTOR

Individual Confession

For a believing person individual confession is a demand of the soul. Generally, anyone under adversity seeks the sympathy of a kindred spirit to share his doubts and grief. There is a Russian proverb: "A joy shared is a double joy, a grief shared is half the grief." After a confession a believer experiences a special feeling of peace of the soul freed from the burden of sin.

A priest is ever to be ready to patiently hear out any Christian, and also people not close to the Church, those whose faith is not firm enough or even non-believers, and try to find words of consolation and warm sympathy remembering the words of Apostle St. Paul: *I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some* (1 Cor. 9.22). *Who is offended, and I burn not?* (2 Cor. 11.29).

People who come to confession, are different: the faith of some is firm and profound, others

come to church for the first time. Their cultural and moral level also differs. A young pastor finds it difficult to apply theological schemes he was introduced to at a theological school to the solution of problems parishioners are concerned with. Sometimes a priest gets a parish where his predecessors weaned the faithful from individual confession.

The striving to awaken in a Christian penitential feelings is to become the main aim of a modern priest. It is attained through patient elucidation of the need for true repentance. For the purpose questions must be put: when the person came to confession last, whether any spiritual effort was made since then, such as struggle with sinful habits, was any good done to a neighbour, what sin the person considers the gravest. A priest should ask the questions gently and without censure and pass to the next only after the

preceding one is answered.

It so happens that, out of false shame before the confessor, and to avoid painful feelings, a Christian dwells on insignificant matters and says nothing of what lies heavy on his conscience. It is especially difficult to speak of the violation of the seventh commandment, abuse of alcohol, theft. A priest should help such people to repent, to ask questions about mortal sins, unobtrusively but firmly: whether the person committed such sins before, whether he or she confessed them and committed them again after confession. Upon getting answers, the priest reminds the penitent that those who commit grave sins and do not repent, according to Apostle St. Paul, shall never *inherit the kingdom of God* (1 Cor. 6.10).

If a person, upon confessing a sin committed long ago, admits that he or she concealed it, out of false shame, at former confessions, the priest should first praise the penitent for confessing the sin at last, but then point out that the concealment made previous confessions deficient and Holy Communion probably harmful.

At confession the priest should suppress the feeling of curiosity and ask only of what is important for perfecting the spiritual life of the penitent. One should be very careful when violations of the seventh commandment are being confessed. Irrelevant questions may rather teach an inexperienced person to sin than correct his ways.

The farther the person is from the Church the more difficult it is for him to see his sins. Such Christians consider sinful only such grave violations of Divine Law as murder, renunciation of God, theft, fornication, etc. But even for these sins they find thousands of justifications. They justify abortion by low living standards, fornication by impossibility to conclude a marriage, and so on. The priest should patiently explain to these people that life outside the Church is already sinful, that life without fasting, without penitence and Holy Communion is not worthy of eternal life in God's Kingdom, the more so a life burdened by sins. It is necessary to say that self-justification because of a person's ignorance of the basics of Christianity and the richest Orthodox experience of the Holy Fathers is impermissible.

The following cases are also frequent in pastoral practice: people attend church all through their life, pray, fast, partake of sacraments and declare at confession that they have no sins. It is especially difficult to awaken penitential feelings in such people. They firmly believe that they are right and that the priest is nagging at them; they are sure that if they live without quarrel (often they have no one to quarrel with, for they are lonely) and do not notice their faults, they are sinless. The priest should then patiently explain to them that sin is not only a sinful action, but also impure thoughts and intentions,

and adduce the words of the Saviour to the effect that *every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement* (Mt. 12.36), and the Gospel text which says that *whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart* (Mt. 5.28).

It should be noted that unwillingness to see one's own sins is an ailment of the soul. It is the false righteousness of the Pharisees that Jesus Christ exposed more than anything else, because a person oblivious of sin does not grow spiritually and is unable to strive for perfection. One has to pray zealously as the saints did and ask the Lord to make the blind soul see again. Ephraem Syrus in his prayer says the following remarkable words: "Grant me, O Lord, to see my transgressions and not to condemn my brethren." Here is an appropriate example: everything seems clean in a dimly lit room, but the sun's rays will reveal heaps of dust. So the soul, unenlightened by prayer, by God's grace, looks clean, but when the inner eyes are opened hosts of sins are revealed. It is because they were enlightened with grace that the great saints considered themselves sinful and wept.

If "the sinless" upon the attempts to call them to reason persist in their delusion, the priest has no right to read absolution prayers and admit them to Holy Communion. They should be told to ask the Lord to open the eyes of their souls.

A young priest may come across another extreme. Some Christians are fond of telling of their sins in detail, recall the circumstances, sometimes give psychological analysis, justifying themselves in the process.

It is especially difficult to hear confession of insane people. Even an experienced priest cannot identify an insane person with certainty. They take a lot of time, are at times very importunate, touchy, ask too many insignificant questions, would argue and may easily upset the priest. It is necessary in such cases gently and firmly to ask the penitent to name his sin and leave it to the priest to put questions providing for sincere repentance.

Confession should not be turned into condemnation of one's neighbour. Some Christians, to belittle their sinful actions, start condemning other people who allegedly drove them to sin. The priest should remember that during confession the initiative is to belong to the penitent, and consequently, it is impermissible to turn confession from a dialogue into a sermon or an edification. Besides the questions bearing on definite sins, the priest should ask the penitent whether he or she performs good deeds, helps people, the ailing, the lonely, and should cut short any attempt at boasting, and claims to gratitude and acknowledgement of one's merits.

Vyacheslav MARCHENKOV

The Ugresha Monastery

On the way to the Plain of Kulikovo the Grand Prince Dimitry stopped to rest in a picturesque spot fifteen versts south-east of Moscow. It was there that the icon of St. Nicholas the Miracle Worker, appeared to the faithful Grand Prince Dimitry, strengthening him in faith and hope, and "warmed [ugresha] his heart". Since then the place was named Ugresha.¹

Returning victorious from the Kulikovo Battle, the warriors held a moleben at the place of the miraculous appearance of the icon and the Grand Prince Dimitry commanded that a church and monastery dedicated to St. Nicholas be built on the spot: "A glorious cloister will I raise here, for the satisfaction and sustenance of all without scarcity," it says in an old monastic book. We know the names of the first hegumens of the monastery from its Synodicon—Sergy and Iona.²

Today the Ugresha Monastery of St. Nicholas is one of the monasteries recently returned to the Church. In 1990, Archimandrite Veniamin was sent there and upon him placed the burden of restoring both its external grandeur and internal monastic order.

Like many monasteries situated near the capital, the Ugresha Monastery of St. Nicholas had suffered misfortune time and again during hard years for our Motherland. It was burned down and plundered but always rose again and prospered.

The fame and wealth of the monastery was promoted by the fact that it was situated near the royal village of Ostrovo a place favoured and often visited by the Moscow tsars. Arriving there, the royal family always made an excursion to the Ugresha Monastery with their whole suite. During one of the most memorable "Ugresha excursions" by Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich II in June 1668, Ugresha was visited simultaneously by three patriarchs: Paisius of Alexandria, Macarius of Antioch, and Ioasaf of Moscow.

The next visit by a primate of the Church to the monastery took place in spring of 1991 when the semi-ruined cloister was visited by Patriarch Aleksey II of Moscow and All Russia. His Holiness consecrated the first restored Church of the Dormition and its side-chapel

dedicated to St. Mary of Egypt.

The monastery's Synodicon contains names of the majority of distinguished Russian families, many of whom have died out: Sitsky, Telyatevsky, Shchenyatev, Belsky, Eletsy... The monastery was loved and renowned not only among the court circles, but people of all walks of life came there from all over Russia.

The monastery was attacked by the enemy more than once: by the Mongols-Tatars, Lithuanians, and French. For example in 1521, the monastery was burned down by the troops of the Crimean Khan Makhmet Girei, who had plundered the entire southern approaches to Moscow. However, only several decades were required for the revival of the monastery and in 1610 the Pretender Pseudo-Dimitry, who had made his base in



"Jerusalem" wall of the monastery



The Transfiguration Cathedral and the belfry of the Ugresha St. Nicholas Monastery by the beginning of restoration

Ugresha, received there the envoys of Hetman Zholkevsky. And in 1611, the Moscow voivodes, Lyapunov and Zarutsky, made the monastery the meeting place of their regiments before their attack upon Moscow.

The monastery was involved also in the events connected with the Old Believers' schism. In his *Life*, Archpriest Avvakum writes: "The same leader, Osip Salov, with his troops took me to the Monastery of St. Nicholas at Ugresha... and put me into an icy cold chamber, and the others—a deacon and the priest, Nikita of Suzdal, were put in other chambers... I was there for seventeen weeks but others, poor things, could not stand in and submitted, after fifteen weeks..." In this icy prison on Ascension Day, Avvakum had "God's visitation" about which he wrote to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich. The tsar came, walked outside his prison, groaned, and went away.³

The 18th century saw times of hardship for the Russian Orthodox Church. Secularization of Church lands, big taxes on monasteries, the unscrupulousness and abuse of spiritual and secular authorities, confusion in the administration of

Church estates, the government order to decrease the number of monks and nuns—these were far from all the causes for the fall of monasteries in Russia. The St. Nicholas Monastery at Ugresha suffered such ruin as it had not experienced since the days of the Mongol-Tatar invasions.

It was not only external impoverishment but spiritual too. Much of it was due to the custom of sending to monasteries for penance persons who had committed offences and very often even criminals. In 1759, Hegumen Yefrem of Ugresha petitioned the Spiritual Consistory to remove convicts from monasteries, convicts who had been sent there by the secret service, and a year later, Hegumen Irinei complained against a clerk who with others had caused riots and disorder in the monastery.⁴

The monastic community decreased year by year at the Ugresha Monastery; by 1833 there remained only six members and the question arose of closing the monastery. However, the Lord did not allow the ancient monastery to die out; Hegumen Ilary, formerly of the Optina Hermitage

who had passed his novitiate at the Solovetsky Monastery, and his successor Pimen, began a long and patient work to revive the bygone spirit of the Ugresha Monastery. The monastery, whose outer aspect had been formed in the 16th-18th centuries, was radically reconstructed. The walls were renovated, new churches built and old ones restored: in 1840, the church dedicated to the Beheading of St. John the Baptist was consecrated, in 1852—the Dormition Church, in 1869, the Church of the Icon of the Mother of God "Consolation of All the Afflicted" and the skete church dedicated to the Apostles Sts. Peter and Paul. Guesthouses were built for pilgrims, as well as a hospital, an almshouse and a monastic school.

The northern wall was built in such a way that a pilgrim approaching it from the north seemed to be entering the Holy City of Jerusalem. This wall was called the "Palestine" or the "Jerusalem" and depicted the ancient city in conventional, iconographic forms.

The majestic Cathedral of the Transfiguration built by the architect A. Kaminsky in 1880-

1894, was an architectural wonder and dominated the monastic ensemble.

Big state and monastic resources were invested into the building, but the monastery would not have risen so fast had it not been for numerous philanthropists. The most lavish of them, the Moscovites P. Aleksandrov and P. Kumanin, were buried at the monastery to which they had helped to bring back the aspect worthy of a holy place.

As it turned out, traditional Russian patronage still exists today. The local industries in the district the monastery is situated (Dzerzhinsky City lies between Moscow and Lyubertsy) have taken patronage over it. To draw the attention of the public to the restoration of the monastery, Archimandrite Veniamin formed a public committee of revival, whose chairman became the director of Thermal Power Station 22, M. Kozlov. Just as in the past, Father Veniamin reads the Synodicon today not only reciting the names of all the superiors of the monastery, but its former and present donors.

In 1917 the monastery possessed 390 desyatinas of land, ten churches and five chapels, it had a cenobitic rule and belonged to the third class.⁵ There were 49 monks and 14 novices, which was considered many even in those days.⁶

The coming into power of the Bolsheviks meant disaster for all Russian monasteries. In their first decrees, Soviet power proclaimed nationalization of monastic property (Decree on Land), the monasteries were deprived of legal rights and all their possessions proclaimed public property (Decree of January 20, 1918). The newspapers accused the clergy of inciting counter-revolution, speculation and hiding of property. The Bolsheviks planned to devastate the monasteries within

several months, but it took them several years because of the resistance of the faithful and the civil war.⁷

The Ugresha Monastery of St. Nicholas derived its income mainly from its lands (the land was cultivated by the monks or rented out). Right after the revolution the local authorities deprived the monastery of this source of income. But this was not their only encroachment, the new powers disliked having a strong monastery so near the capital and enjoying the love of inhabitants in the neighbourhood. Moreover its Father Superior, Metropolitan Makary, who had refused to recognize Soviet power, lived there.

The newspaper *Izvestia* of August 8, 1918, in its unsigned article entitled "Most Holy Counter-Revolution" informed its readers that the superior of the Ugresha Monastery of St. Nicholas had refused to have the monastery horses mobilized to meet the needs of the military commissariat stating that: "I do not recognize your Soviet power, therefore do whatever you like, plunder without my consent." While the representatives of the authorities negotiated with the superior, Metropolitan Makary, the monks mobilized the inhabitants of the neighbourhood to protect the monastery from

being robbed. A crowd of peasants (mainly small landowners as stated the newspaper) beat up the representatives of the Soviet and the decision on mobilization was repealed.

These events immediately drew the attention of the uezd extraordinary commission. The Cheka officials naturally established that hiding in the monastery guesthouse were White Army men who were carrying on anti-Soviet propaganda and that the chambers of Metropolitan Makary were the secret headquarters of the Black Hundreds. Among the evidences given were the appeal of Metropolitan Makary to the Orthodox people of Russia in connection with the tragic end of the former sovereign, Emperor Nikolai Aleksandrovich; the plan to form a league of parish communities; the appeal of Metropolitan Makary to the people in connection with the commemoration day of Patriarch Germogen, in which the people were called upon to rise in defence of Holy Church against Bolshevik violence; the charter of the clerical Peasant Socialist Party; and the Rule of the St. Serafim Religious Society. The metropolitan was arrested and imprisoned, the monastery was closed down.

How far was the newspaper



That was the state of the monastery buildings returned to the Church by the state



The transition, or rather return, to free models of economics should create, apart from all else, conditions for the revival of patronship—a traditional form of relationship between industrialists and the Church in Russia. A free and wealthy Russian proprietor was always ready to donate big money for the restoration of ecclesiastical grandeur. The experience of the Ugresha Monastery of St. Nicholas confirms this fact.

Although the monastery is experiencing, as formerly, organizational difficulties (for example, the former buildings and the Church of the Icon of the Mother of God "Consolation of All the Afflicted" have not yet been vacated by the city's skin-venereal diseases clinic with its 110 patients, and people are still living in the monks' cells), but the restoration of the huge Transfiguration Cathedral has begun and work is in full swing on other objectives... It has even become possible to publish a monastic paper, the first in the recent Church history.

"I wish the *Nikolo-Ugresha Vestnik* success in its educational activity for the benefit of its readers who wish to participate in the movement towards the sources of national culture, towards the rebirth of the multifaceted spiritual life of Russia," concludes the greetings letter from I. Silaev.

The first issue of the *Vestnik* (five thousand copies) was disseminated actively by the local printers' union. It also carries the appeal from Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia to young people; the Church Calendar; historical and catechetical material and current news.

"Decades ago the natural historical course of Russia's development was disrupted... The great experiment has ended in complete failure... There is no other way open for us but urgent... return to the eternal moral values of

article true? Perhaps the archives of the State Security Committee will reveal it in the near future. But even if everything written in the article is true, the facts, contrary to the author's will, speak of the authority enjoyed by the monastery among the peasants (otherwise they would not have risen in its defence), of the strong resistance to the godless authorities and the self-sacrifice of the pastors who were preaching God's Truth to the people.

Having closed down one of the most magnificent of Russian monasteries, glorious in its history, Soviet power listed among architectural monuments to be preserved only the old St. Nicholas Cathedral and the Dormition Church, considering the rest of no value.⁸ This meant that the monastery would be plundered, left to decay and be forgotten. So it happened. Today out of the fifteen churches only seven have survived, and even these in semi-ruined condition. Even the old Cathedral of St. Nicholas, taken under protection, was dismantled in 1940. The royal and patriarchal palaces, the monks' cells and guesthouse were all converted into dwelling houses. The monastic cemetery was destroyed, and the pond has turned into a bog...⁹

In the 1970s, the state attempted

to begin restoration work at the monastery. About ten workers carried on the work but they set going the illegal production of grave monuments out of stones issued for restoration work. In the opinion of the local people, in order to hide the loss, on Easter of 1977 the workers set fire to the only building restored by that time—the bishop's residence with the Church of St. Sergy. The criminals were not found and the restoration ceased completely.¹⁰ This is nothing to be surprised at for alien, indifferent and selfish hands cannot rebuild anew any monastery. It can be accomplished only by its lawful master, the Orthodox Church, and she must be helped by all the faithful people of Russia.

"I welcome the noble activity of the public committee for the revival of the Ugresha Monastery of St. Nicholas, one of the oldest religious centres of Russia," these words said by I. Silaev, Chairman of the Inter-Republican Committee on Operative Administration of the Public Economy of the USSR, when he visited the monastery as Prime Minister of Russia, open the first issue of the *Nikolo-Ugresha Vestnik*. The monastery began publishing its ecclesio-social paper in October 1991.

humanity. And the Church will play in this not the least role..." We have become used to such words, but reading them in the article by the chairman of the Dzerzhinsky City Executive Committee, V. Dorkin, published in this issue of *Vestnik*, and observing the present depressing aspect of the ancient cloister, one becomes convinced again of their correctness. May God grant that the only reminder of the hard years be not the ruined churches, but the name of the city which belongs to the past. Then, indeed, together with the chairman of the Lyubertsy City Executive Committee, who has also taken part in the restoration of the monastery

and whose item the paper has published, we may hope that "the most thorny section of the Russian Orthodox Church's path has been passed".

* * *

For the information of pilgrims: one can get to the monastery by Bus No. 347 from the "Tekstilshchiki" metro station (to the terminal). Donations are requested to be remitted to our bank account 701005, Lyubertsy branch, Lyubertsy, MFO 211305.

NOTES

1. *Ugresha. Historical description of the Ugresha Monastery of St. Nicholas.*

- Moscow, 1881, p. 5.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
3. *Life of Archpriest Avvakum and His Other Essays.* Moscow, 1960.
4. *Ugresha. Historical description...*, p. 20.
5. S. Zvonarev. *Forty Times Forty.* Index album of all Moscow churches. Paris, 1988, p. 366.
6. First Class monasteries received from the Treasury 2,500 rubles annually and had not more than 33 monks; the Second Class—1,500 rubles and had 17 monks; the Third Class—950 rubles and 12 monks.
7. V. Zybkovets. *The Nationalization of Monastic Properties in Soviet Russia (1917—1921)*, Moscow, 1975, p. 33.
8. The Central State Archives of the October Revolution, Moscow, Fund P-I, No. 33.
9. S. Zvonarev. *Forty Times Forty...*, p. 369.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 371.

I. TSVETKOVA,
Ye. KOMAROV

The "Eleusa" Icon Will Return to Diveyevo

The "Tenderness" (Eleusa) miracle-working icon of the Mother of God, which St. Serafim called the Icon of the Mother of God "The Joy of All Joys", has always been and remains one of the greatest shrines of the Diveyevo Convent of St. Serafim.

The Editorial Board has got a letter from artist Aleksei Artsybushev, who was born near the Diveyevo Convent and has lived to see its revival, becoming a witness to the fruition of the prophesies of the great Sarov starets.

In his letter he tells of the fate of the Diveyevo Icon of the Mother of God called "Tenderness": by the holy oil taken from the inextinguishable lampada burning before this icon St. Serafim healed many people who came to him. And it is before this icon that, genuflected, the saintly man breathed his last, commending his holy soul to God.

The "Tenderness" Icon of the Mother of God, that was handed over to the Diveyevo Convent after the demise of St. Serafim, signified the supreme hegumenship of the Most Pure Virgin Theotokos, which was promised by Her to Her cloister, Her fourth lot on earth, and therefore none of the mothers superior has ever called herself hegumene, but merely a deputy to the Supreme Hegumene. And both in the Trinity Cathedral and the winter Church of the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God their place has always been behind the big case with this icon. At the times difficult for the convent, its mothers superior always turned to the Supreme Hegumene, beseeching her blessing: they put a lot at Her icon which they drew after many days' fasting

and prayers by the whole cloister.

The "Tenderness" Icon of the Mother of God was painted in oil on canvas stretched on a 67×49 cm cypress board and is not classed among the works of early Russian icon-painting schools. To all probability it was painted in the second half of the 18th century. As the Diveyevo chronicle says, "through the efforts of Natalia Bogdanova, a gilded riza was put on the icon." Another, precious, riza was presented by Emperor Nicholas II.

In the hard post-revolutionary years Diveyevo icon painters made several exact copies of the original "Tenderness" icon, which, at times of danger, replaced the cloister's main shrine for the sake of its preservation.

The Orthodox believe that every icon is miracle-working: everything depends on our faith. Even a miracle-working icon will not perform a miracle if there is no faith.

On September 8/21, 1927, on the Feast of the Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God, the Diveyevo Convent was closed down. The prophetic words of the saintly man came true: a hundred years before this he told the Diveyevo sisters, "You will leave Diveyevo through the Nativity Gates and will scatter like peas of the Mother of God."

And it came to pass that on the Feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God they went away and scattered like peas over the neighbouring towns and villages, with their miserable goods and chattels and also the shrines dear to their hearts.

"Joy of All Joys" icon remained in its Hegumene's

place in the deserted Trinity Cathedral. But it was actually its copy: the original icon left the cloister in secret.

Mother Aleksandra, the last mother superior of the Diveyevo Convent, settled with the convent sisters in the town of Murom, Vladimir Region, some 200 kilometres from Diveyevo. She bought a small house near the former Annunciation Monastery, and shared it with schemanun Serafima, the doctor of the Diveyevo Convent, her cell mate, Anna Barinova, whom she had taken from the convent's orphanage, and several other girl-postulants.

At night the precious riza, presented by the Emperor and kept by Mother Aleksandra for decades, was buried secretly in the tiny garden near the house. As to the icon "The Joy of All Joys" itself, it occupied an inconspicuous place on an old chest of drawers in the darkest corner of Mother Aleksandra's cell. It could be identified only by those who prayed before it. I, too, kissed this icon when in 1930, after my uncle had been executed by shooting, my mother was evicted with her children from her Diveyevo parents' house to Murom. I was eleven at that time.

In 1915 my two aunts were professed in the Diveyevo Convent. One of them completed her earthly path in schema with the name of Feofania, the other—as an ordinary nun with the name of Varvara. My father, brother and grandfather were buried in the cloister's cemetery which does not exist any longer.

After Mother Aleksandra's death, Anna Barinova, who by that time had become Maria, continued to live in the house where the "Tenderness" icon stood as before. Maria, schemanun Feofania and several other sisters earned their living by making mitres, omophorions and church utensils. Hieromonk Pimen, the future Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, also learned this art from them. In the 1940s he served in the Annunciation Church, the only surviving church in Murom, where Diveyevo sisters sang at that time.

...Years passed. Hieromonk Pimen became the Patriarch, while Sister Maria fell seriously ill

and was preparing to depart unto the Lord. But could she die in peace without taking care of the great Diveyevo shrine? Who would she entrust the holy icon to?

The riza was dug out from the hiding-place. Staying in earth for a long time it turned dark, and the pearls decorating the veil of the Mother of God were almost completely destroyed by time and moisture. Sister Maria approached Patriarch Pimen who blessed his old-time friend Father Viktor Shapovalnikov to preserve the shrine, saying: "May God grant that, through the prayers of St. Serafim the day will come when you, dear Father, will hand this shrine over to where it belongs." And this is exactly what happened, although Father Viktor was very much afraid he would not live long enough to do this.

From 1980 to 1991 Father Viktor and Mother Maria kept St. Serafim's icon safe in their house outside Moscow. Mother Maria inlaid the head veil of the Queen of Heaven with pearls all over again, completely cleared and restored the riza itself, returning to it its original appearance.

Here, at Father Viktor's, I met with "The Joy of All Joys", familiar to me from childhood, in front of which an inextinguishable lampada was burning in keeping with the saint's commandment. And St. Serafim himself was standing next to it, with his blessing hand and sky-blue eyes. Who of us could hope then that the time was round the corner when they would "sing the Paschal hymn in mid-summer"?

Last June Father Viktor handed the "Tenderness" Icon of the Mother of God to His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, but circumstances prevented it from coming to the Diveyevo Convent together with the relics. We are still to see this solemnity. In the meantime the finest master craftsmen in Moscow are carving two icon-cases, exact copies of the former ones, on the money donated by people of God. These are to be installed in the Trinity Cathedral of the Diveyevo Convent of St. Serafim for the next Easter: one for the the "Tenderness" Icon, the other—for the icon of St. Serafim.

Notes from the Round Table Meeting

Last autumn the editors of the *Pravoslavnaya Beseda* (Orthodox Talk) magazine assembled Orthodox public figures, church journalists and publishers, writers, scholars and pedagogues for a round-table meeting which was held in the oval hall of the Library of Foreign Literature. They were to discuss urgent problems: difficulties encountered by our new publications—*Pravoslavny Inok* (Orthodox Monk), *Khram* (The Church), *Svyataya Rus* (Holy Rus), *Pravoslavny Put* (Orthodox Path), *Voskresnaya Shkola* (Sunday School) magazines. As to *Pravoslavnaya Beseda* magazine it has brought out only two issues during the first eleven months of its existence. In addition to publishing matters, it was planned to discuss questions related to catechization, Sunday schools, prospects for Orthodox education by means of radio and television, as well as in universities and lyceums. However, the meeting was originally intended as a presentation of the *Pravoslavnaya Beseda* magazine.

The meeting's chairman, V. Lebedev, editor-in-chief of the magazine, made the introductory address in which he outlined a wide range of problems, expressed dissatisfaction with the obtaining situation: society, which has freed itself from the pressure of totalitarianism, gained real freedoms—of conscience, political organizations, the press, nevertheless practically turns a deaf ear to the voice of the Church. Distribution of Orthodox newspapers and magazines is poorly organized. New church publications are desperately short of funds. The spiritually-enlightening voice of our pastors can rarely be heard on the radio or TV. In the context of the unfolding market relations promising periodicals, such as *Pravoslavny Inok*, for example, cease to exist as soon as they come into being. Some diocesan administrations likewise take a passive stand on this issue. Practically no literature is being published in many important fields, such as church apologetics and fundamentals of the church doctrine. We are short of professional church journalists because of the ban imposed on this profession during the years of Soviet government. Ecclesio-social terminology, stylistics as well as orthographic rules in religious texts have not yet been sufficiently elaborated. Text-books on style do not contain the very concept of "church style" or description of its varieties. Small wonder, therefore, that the language of publicistic articles abounds in shortcomings, the most conspicuous of which is an inordinate exploitation of the vocabulary and phraseology of a secular-bureaucratic and archaic nature. Finally, there is no uniform ecclesiastical conception of publishing activity. In a word, things are not as we would like them to be, and to remedy the state of affairs in this sphere it is necessary to enlist vital, interested forces of our progressive-minded public.

At a time when the state has completely lost

the possibility to achieve a spiritual alliance with the Church, when the "principle of symphony" between them has become a thing of the past, the chairman's appeal to join efforts in bringing the Word of God to the world is quite topical and deserves a serious attitude. In fact, it testifies to the formation of a new type of alliance—between the Church and the Christian community.

Speaking about modern scientific apologetics, Viktor Trostnikov pointed out that this discipline had not yet been included in the curriculums of theological schools as is the case in the rest of the civilized world. Admitting the need for introduction of scientific apologetics in the structure of theological education, we shall nevertheless point out that it has become a good manner the secular world to refer to the example of the West, considering it *a priori* to be a model for Russia in all respects. We make bold to doubt the usefulness of such comparisons.

As for the ethical aspect of round-table meetings and conferences, it would be worth recalling the well-known opinion: the important thing is not only *what*, but also *how* we say. And it should also be added: *in the name of what*. Only when we act in the name of God are we on our way to Life Eternal. Unfortunately, we, all of us, do not adhere to this "business-like" principle at this time beset with confusion.

Many participants in the meeting displayed wisdom and interest in dealing with various aspects of the subject discussed. No less wise and convincing were the thoughts and ideas expressed at the meeting by scholars and public figures. However we have to admit that there was no living talk at the meeting. What is required for this is not merely an exchange of opinions, but a dialogue, conversation, and, even debates, perhaps. Speeches delivered in accordance with a list drawn up in advance by organizers of a meeting always produce a somewhat depressing impression. In this situation any "outsider" practically has no chance to enter the conversation even if he has something to say. Many editors, teachers and public figures actually proved to be outside the round-table meeting. They were expected to establish useful contacts during an interval and to discuss the raised problems in the lobby, but, alas, the meeting had no break "for technical reasons".

Noteworthy is the idea of establishing an association of Orthodox publishers (director A. Michalin) which would help its members to organize production, supply and distribution. It is a pity that representatives of this organization did not have enough time to share their thoughts and plans with the meeting participants.

The need has long since been felt not only for an association but also for a fund of assistance to new periodicals whose leaders would be able to identify a truly Orthodox bias in a nascent press organ and see prospects for its development. Having struck root, a new publication would gradually pay the "allowance" back

to the depositor, and even become the fund's contributor itself.

There was one more serious problem of the church press—the issue of regional publications, in the first place, diocesan newspapers—which, intentionally or unintentionally, was not discussed during the meeting. This problem is not reduced to the shortage of paper and the absence of printing presses: the stumbling block here is the personnel problem. Working collectives of these publications can form gradually under spiritual and administrative-economic guidance of diocesan hierarchs, but without any excessive fettering tutelage. Should church newspapers really be turned into a church calendar or bulletin publishing decrees and obituaries and leaving no place for questions related to church life and the life of society? Neither should they make excessive use of the material reprinted from the central church press, the books by the Holy Fathers of the Church, neglecting urgent and acute problems of diocesan life. Finally, the bodies concerned should also see to it that the central and regional church press is distributed not only through churches or by subscription but also through the retail Soyuzpechat network.

A well-organized and smoothly-functioning system of diocesan publications will not only promote the spiritual guidance and education of our people but will also help establish closer relations between worshippers in parishes. Moreover, this will open additional opportunities for advertising religious books and periodicals, as the Russian provinces often do not know of the existence of many publications that have already come off the press. To prove the point we could refer to the statement made at the round-table meeting by a woman who lives in the province. She said that

neither she herself nor the people she knows (all of them are worshippers) suspected that there was such magazine as *Pravoslavnaya Beseda*, for instance.

Her statement was echoed by Archpriest Dimitry Smirnov who maintained, contrary to the general opinion, that the book market had not even begun to be satiated with religious literature: over the vast expanses of Siberia and the Far East people experience a veritable literary hunger.

Unfortunately, the meeting failed to discuss a draft address to the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Holy Synod which could formulate practical results of the meeting and become a lever of the Christian opinion that could give a fresh impetus to development of the religious and enlightening thought.

Today it is necessary to pool efforts of those who preach from the ambo, teach or lecture in the hall or class-room, speak over the radio and on TV, address readers from pages of the periodical press. The truthful voice of the Church should be distinctly heard in the noise of present-day life. To induce man to give a serious thought to the meaning of his life, his *raison d'être*, to Life Eternal is the task constantly facing Christian communicators. From this point of view a round-table meeting like the one arranged by the *Pravoslavnaya Beseda* was an urgent necessity a long time ago.

We must not fall into the sin of mutual condemnation for each other's involuntary errors. So let us repeat with hope after our Lord Jesus Christ: *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled* (Mt. 5, 6).

G. ARKHIPOV

The Inaccessible Hermitage

"The Patriarch is high up and the Vysha Hermitage is far off" — this is the complaint involuntarily uttered by pilgrims who go to the Vysha Hermitage of the Dormition along the Shatsk road, one that was laid over dead bodies of convicts who built it in the 1950s... They starved and many of them died. The churches along the road, once majestically beautiful, were turned into miserable ruins.

There is a holy spring by the roadside. The locality was once famous for its meadows, but meliorators came along and no ploughing or sowing has been done here for several years now. A similar spring gushes out not far from the Vysha. The soil there is sandy and thin. The population dwindled considerably after the Khrushchev decrees, with the people going to towns and leaving behind only the poetic names of forsaken villages: Zhelannoye (Cherished), Zavidnoye (Enviably)... The residents are employed mainly at the timber factory or at the mental diseases hospital occupying the former Vysha Dormition Cloister.

...We know from chronicles that the Vysha Dormition Hermitage has existed since 1625. A wooden cloister stood six kilometres upstream of the present one, at the confluence of the rivers Vysha and Tsna. After the cloister had been destroyed by a fire, the monks floated a Kazan Icon of the Mother of God and laid the foundation of a new one at the site where the icon was washed ashore.

In 1761 the Dormition Church was built at the cloister, with the side chapel of St. Nicholas on the right, and of St. Sergy of Radonezh on the left. In the 19th century Archpriest Ioann Napolinsky of Morshansk, donated money for the construction of the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God. The church, cross-shaped in plan, has three altars: in honour of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, in honour of the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God, and in honour of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist.

The Vysha Hermitage reached its heyday at the turn of the 20th century when Archimandrite Arkady



Cathedral of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ at the Vysha Dormition Hermitage

was its father superior, a wise builder and a zealous pastor. During the 45 years of office he built the five-cupola Cathedral of the Nativity of Christ, a miniature replica of the St. Isaac's Cathedral in St. Petersburg; the cloister wall with its watchtowers was repaired and extended; a two-storey stone building was erected to accommodate elderly and ailing monks on the ground floor, with a special room for reading Psalms and for praying for the living and commemorating the dead. At the ground floor there was a pharmacy for the brethren and the worshippers.

In 1896 two stone hotels were built, a bakery, premises for brewing kvas (a kind of ginger ale), stalls and an inn.

The father superior took special care of the Kuplya two-class school built for children of the poor on the advice of St. Feofan, as well as of every church and every church school in the Shatsk District. Thanks to him, many pupils from poor families received decent education and upbringing, and some of them became hierarchs.

The cloister became particularly famous during the 28 years that St. Feofan, the Recluse of Vysha (1815-1894) spent there.

In 1866 Vladyka Feofan retired and moved to the Vysha Dormition Hermitage, a cenobitic cloister with a strict Rule. "Vysha can only be given up for the Heavenly Kingdom," he wrote at the time.

After six years at the cloister, the saintly man started the life of a recluse; he made himself an altar and a small iconostasis, for which he painted the icons himself, and consecrated his little church in honour of the Epiphany; he prayed, incessantly saying Jesus prayer, and devoted the rest of his time mainly to theological writings. There was a huge library in his study.

With all those who aspired for his spiritual guidance he communicated exclusively by correspondence.

* * *

After 1917, services continued to be performed at the Church of the Nativity of Christ. A timber office occupied the hermitage at the time, then it was given over to a pig-raising state farm. Local inhabitants say when the farm ran short of buckets to feed pigs someone suggested to strip the domes of the Dormition Cathedral! They did strip them and made pails. Some people say the stripped metal

was sold and the money squandered on drinks. They remember those who committed the sacrilege, but do not feel like giving the names, not to invite trouble.

In 1938 a mental hospital was stationed at the cloister, and several years before that it had been a mental home. The difference between the two was explained by local people as follows: "In the hospital you can get some treatment anyway, but at the home it's hopeless..."

At the beginning there were only 20 to 30 patients in the hospital but their number increased about ten times over during the war, some being brought from Leningrad and even from Poland. Now their number is nearly seven hundred and fifty.

Father superior's building is now occupied by the chief psychiatrist Ivan Mushikhin and his assistant, the cells have been turned into apartments for the medical personnel or into wards. One cell is set apart for visitors—twenty eight narrow steps lead up into it, there is a bright electric lamp right under the ceiling and there are icon-stands in the corners. At night bats strike against the arched window-panes.

Two huge shapeless masses of bricks in the courtyard remind one of the four-tier belfry styled after the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, with the middle part being a church of the Life-Giving Trinity. The toll of its bells could be heard some forty kilometres away.

More recent deeds may also be remembered. In the 1970s, when the belfry started to crumble, the local authorities sanctioned its pulling down. The top-quality bricks went to build a boiler-house, an extension to the main hospital building, an X-ray room and an isolation ward.

The small stuffy cells accommodated 15 to 20 patients each even then. According to the old standards, each patient was entitled to 7.5 sq m of ward floor space; now it is 2.5 sq m theoretically, but actually only 2 sq m, just for the bed and no space at all to stand on. The buildings are more than one hundred years old. It is easier to build new ones than to repair the old structures, says the chief psychiatrist. The regional health authorities allocate annually about 50 thousand rubles for repairs, but where can you find good masons or roofers? It is not ordinary roofs to be patched but cathedral domes...

Some thirty years ago a sewage system was installed in the hospital, whose maximum term of operation was fourteen years. Local people recall that at first the hospital used the cloister cesspools, then someone decided to modernize them but the system did not operate properly; now the sewage goes into the lake and starts to evaporate early in the summer, filling the environments with repulsive stench.

During the winter the heating pipes would burst two or three times, complains the chief psychiatrist, and patients stay in cold wards; instead of the requisite 28 stokers, plumbers and electricians there are only six, and only six kitchen workers are available instead of the 28 required...

Local people say that in the hermitage there was a hotel for parishioners attached to the cloister and an almshouse for sickly pilgrims. Now alongside the hospital there is a kind of an almshouse too—a neurological boarding house. Those living in the house are entitled to a sweater each, a substantial privilege in winter time since in the hospital one such sweater is shared by six patients.

Two hundred and fifty hospital staff, mostly ancillary personnel, are old-age pensioners who may be absent from their job any day. Not a single young medical graduate has joined the staff over the past five or six years.

The following fact is recalled from the history of the hospital. In 1951, when the majority of the patients were mentally handicapped murderers and rapists, a riot broke out caused by difficult living conditions. Putting down the riot proved to be not easy. Finally fire-hoses were used to pour faeces on the mutineers.

A riot in the hospital can hardly be imagined nowadays. Sixty per cent of the patients are vagrants, on their way to the next world. As many as thirty deaths occur here every year, of tuberculosis for the most part. Until recently the mortuary was located on the premises, in the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon, next to the old rags depository.

The day came, April 26, 1990, when some of the cloister buildings were formally turned over to the diocese authorities, but the actual transfer was only effected in the spring of 1991 as churches started to be cleaned of debris, and construction workers and restoration specialists moved into some sections of the building occupied by the hospital. Restoration work was begun only towards the summer. It is too early to speak of sisters settling in the Vysha. All the nine nuns live three kilometres away from the cloister, on the Bykov Hill, the former estate of the noble family of the Naryshkins; the cloister rents the estate where natural beauty combines with man-made desoluteness and neglect, where common and unpretentious people have kept their minds and hearts full of wisdom. Local octagenarians are not particularly well-versed in the present-day political controversies, but their spoken word would prevail over most intricate and complicated philosophy.

"What is modesty?" they would ask you, and would explain when no answer comes: "It is conscience plus faith." They also remember the owner of the estate Aleksandra Nikolayevna Naryshkina. The Naryshkins was famous throughout Russia for their wealth: they owned houses in St. Petersburg, Tambov and the Crimea. The Bykov Hill was one of their numerous estates. Some people say the name is derived from the bull-raising farm (*byk* means bull in Russian) others insist the name has come from the estate caretaker Bykov.

Then came 1917. "On June 20," wrote a local newspaper, "the Shamarga volost committee of the Shatsk uezd requisitioned rye, wheat and meadows owned

by Naryshkina." The estate was taken away and the owner arrested.

Later a tuberculosis hospital of all-Union subordination was arranged at the estate but it was transferred somewhere else three years ago since the estate was found unfit for further operation. When the question arose of renting the buildings to the Vysha sisters, they were made the property of the local Soviet. If not for the renting, the estate could have been left at the mercy of the elements.

For the third year running, the nuns have been living under the eviction sword of Damocles. But they maintain cordial relations with the local inhabitants, *troubled on every side, yet not distressed... perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed* (2 Cor. 4. 8-9).

One more seemingly insignificant fact is also noteworthy: prior to the re-opening of the cloister a regular bus line was operated between Shatsk and Vysha every day, but now the runs have been reduced to the minimum so that pilgrims are never sure that they may reach the cloister. The journey to the cloister, especially from autumn till spring, can be relatively easily made only by western media people and Russian MPs.

In the spring of 1991 a survey was carried out in the Ryazan Region by a commission of the Russian parliamentary committee on the freedom of conscience, religion, mercy and charity. The MPs received an active support on the part of native Ryazanians now living in Moscow, as well as from people whose life was associated with the land of Ryazan. The commission could not help discussing the Vysha Hermitage.

In word the powers that be did not object to the idea of restoration, but in deed they tried to hamper it by hook or by crook, and to evict the sisters from the Bykov Hill, preventing them from fulfilling the most important monastic obedience—praying in a church of their own which they had re-equipped in a matter of several months on the former dining premises.

That was how it was decided to set up on Bykov Hill a rest home for several collective and state farms on their own funds. Some time before the decision was adopted, L. Khitrin, the then first secretary of the Ryazan Regional Communist Party Committee and chairman of the Regional Soviet, intended to set up art galleries in every district of the region. The idea as such was quite a good one but it involved an expenditure of about two million rubles and properly equipped buildings were needed. Money was hard to come by, particularly considering that the architectural monuments in the region are in poor condition: the restoration of the Ryazan Kremlin has been dragging on since the 1980s and out of the 139 churches protected by the state 92 are used as industrial facilities, 68 of them as warehouses. Nevertheless, the Communist Party Regional Committee summoned the heads of collective and state farms and industrial enterprises and imposed on them a new tax for opening the art galleries. Representatives

of the Ryazan community in Moscow blocked that initiative...

On June 24, 1991, they were making ready in the Vysha Dormition Hermitage to welcome His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia. According to the instructions of the District Communist Party executives, a team of construction workers had been sent to Bykov Hill several days before the scheduled visit in order to improve the road. It was cleared, levelled and made wider sacrificing 50 hectares of seed millet which had to be mowed. Bridges were painted. The work was personally supervised by the first secretary of the District Communist Party Executive Committee (also holding the post of the chairman of the District Soviet). But *every man's work shall be made manifest... for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness* (1 Cor. 3.13, 19)—the Party Committee limousine got stuck on the road and the mowed millet sprouted again. It was then decided to use a helicopter. The first party secretary personally brought a piece of scarlet cloth to identify the landing site and ordered to cut down burdocks on the Bykov Hill. It had been suggested to remove the patients from the mental hospital, and on the day of the Patriarch's arrival an old man Aleksy proudly sat at the gates, wearing a new suit and a brimmed hat. A regular visitor of the church, one of those who had nowhere else to go in their old age, he was waiting for the coming of the Patriarch.

The local authorities sent some men to the Bykov Hill sisters, whose duties included "sampling food" for the table of His Holiness. As early as two days before the visit (!) they also brought the sad news to the sisters: the Patriarch would not visit the cloister. But mother superior and the nuns did not believe them and continued waiting. Among those who came to welcome the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church there were people from the surrounding villages, the parishioners of the church which it had been so difficult to consecrate, the one that stood without bells but was so much conducive to prayer.

However, taking an opportunity of His Holiness' lack of time, L. Khitrin, the first secretary of the Regional Party Committee, suggested changing his itinerary which included places considered as risky from the point of view of the regional party bosses.

Two months later, on August 20, at the height of the putsch, the fate of the Bykov Hill was discussed once again in Shatsk. The district authorities cited their regional superiors, and vice versa, so the mother superior went back empty-handed. The Bykov Hill meanwhile became the property of the district social security commission which decided to make a fast ruble by giving the nuns a termless rent of the Bykov Hill, provided they accord priority to restoring and restructuring the ruined estate mansion. The termless rent which may be annulled at any moment makes the sisters apprehensive rather than

happy. They remember very well the visit paid to them by Artamonov, chairman of the local branch of the charity fund, which had resulted in the order "to take out urgently the icons from the improvised church and to dismantle the utensils." That was when they decided to settle some aged pensioners on the Bykov Hill. But there came no volunteers, so the secretary of the diocesan administration who came along from Ryazan held lengthy discussions with the local party and Soviet authorities which rounded up in his daringly risky personal decision to consecrate the church, as close to nightfall as possible. But just the same, people from surrounding villages gathered to witness the consecration already early in the afternoon and the ceremony was performed in a solemn and pious manner.

* * *

But the Lord, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again (Ps. 78, 38-39).

Local people, who are not particularly well

versed in church affairs, pass the word around that His Holiness the Patriarch would certainly come to the Vysha: if not in autumn, then in winter, on the day of St. Feofan. The road, if it is not drifted in snow, will not be as bumpy then, and there will be no millet to mow. Besides the district and regional authorities have been changed, for God is merciful and, He showed His grace to people of the land of Ryazan: the extraordinary session of the regional Soviet of people's deputies lasted for seven hours. By the ruling of the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, chairman of the regional Soviet L. Khitrin was dismissed from his post for anticonstitutional activities during the putsch.

...It is providential that on the eve of the Feast of St. Sophia and her daughters Faith, Hope and Love the Martyrs, the sisters of the St. Feofan Convent found a spring in the grove near the mansion. They believe that the pure water which gushes out from the spring will wash away their sorrows because they know that the Lord who gives us our burden to carry saves us, for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ (2 Cor. 1.5).

T. VESYOLKINA

TO THE CENTENARY OF THE PUKHTITSA CONVENT

Orthodox Shrines on Crane Hill

Ever since the baptism of Rus this country has obviously been under a guiding protection of the Mother of God. Over the past millennium it has known the hardships of slavery and the joy of liberation, lofty spiritual uplifts and abysmal moral falls, but in its finest part it has never departed from, or has ever been rejected by, the Lord. Even in the hardest times of persecution, a living flame of faith before the images of the Saviour and His Most Pure Mother was maintained in the remotest inner recesses, in people's souls, helping them to overcome everything, to hold out and to revive. Hope has never abandoned Orthodox people. Neither have they been left without the guardianship and care of the Most Holy Theotokos.

The entire Land of Russia became Her abode. Like a seed

cast into fertile soil, this blessing, brought from the Holy Mount of Athos by St. Antony of Pechery (who settled in the Dnieper caves—the place providentially indicated by St. Andrew the First-Called), gave birth to the Kiev Pechery Monastery and, through it, spread all over the newly-baptized land. There are countless cloisters and churches devoted to Her Dormition. Moreover, the Mother of God Herself went round the whole of the Orthodox land, reaching its farthest corners. She appeared to numerous zealots of faith and piety and set up Her numerous miracle-working icons all over the country.

The Land of Estonia has likewise been glorified by the Mother of God. Her miraculous appearance was registered four hundred years ago near the villages situa-

ted on the slopes of Kuremjae (Crane) Hill. For three days in succession Estonian shepherds saw in a grove a Noble Lady in effulgent radiance, who went away as soon as they tried to approach her. Finally, the excited villagers went to the southern slope of Crane Hill, where they had had the vision, and found an Icon of the Dormition of the Mother of God on the branches of a mighty oak. At the same time it was discovered that a curative spring had begun to well up at the foot of the hill. The Estonian peasants handed over the icon to Orthodox residents of the nearby village of Jaama, who built a chapel on the site the shrine was discovered and placed the miracle-working icon there. Since that time this spot got its present name—"Pukhti", which means a "Holy Place", and the Orthodox began to call

it "the Holy Hill of the Mother of God".

To preserve the shrine in the times of trouble—the Livonian wars and then the Northern War—the Icon of the Dormition was transferred to the Narva Cathedral. But in the early 19th century, when an Orthodox parish was opened in the village of Syrenets (now Vasknarva, 25 kilometres from Pukhtitsa), the Pukhtitsa chapel was attached to it, and from Narva the holy icon was handed over to the Church of St. Elijah there. But every year, on the Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, the miracle-working icon was brought in a festal procession, moving along a narrow path through forests and swamps, to the Hill of the Mother of God where it stayed for some time.

But it was not only the Mother of God who showed Her grace for this holy place. On the opposite, northern, side of Crane Hill, at its foot, there stood another old chapel which was dedicated to St. Nicholas and which has a particularly revered icon of this great saint. Apart from the image of St. Nicholas, this small four-part icon also depicted Christ's Resurrection, St. George the Victorious, the Great Martyr, as well as two other martyrs—Sts. Vlasy and Modest. In 1820, the chapel

burnt down together with the whole village, but St. Nicholas appeared in a dream to two peasants and indicated the place where the icon was hidden from fire. The wonder-struck peasants found it on the bottom of a well and soon built a new chapel.

In the last quarter of the 19th century Pukhtitsa became a widely-known spot in the north-west of the country. An Orthodox parish was formed there, and a wooden Dormition Church was erected next to the Chapel of the Dormition. A wooden plank shed, crowned with a cross, was built at the life-bearing spring, and a chapel next to it. On feast days it became a haunt for clergymen, lay worshippers and pilgrims from both nearby and more distant places: Revel, Riga, St. Petersburg.

In 1883 a branch of the Orthodox Baltic Brotherhood of Christ the Saviour and of the Protecting Veil of the Most Holy Theotokos was established in the inhabited locality called Jevva (now Jyhvi). It united many distinguished and well-known people who devoted their efforts to the building and improvement of churches, schools, provision of medical assistance to the rural population, the opening of orphanages and hospitals. St. Ioann the Righteous of Kronshtadt was a member of this brotherhood.



Refectory Church of St. Simeon and Anna

Soon a church dedicated to the Chernigov Icon of the Mother of God was opened at the branch; this was followed by the opening of an outpatients' clinic, a chemist's shop and a school in 1888. It was also at that time that sister Varvara Blokhina of the Kostroma Convent of the Epiphany, and several other sisters were sent to Jevva to attend to the sick, train medical nurses and teach children there.

The year 1888 was significant also for the future Pukhtitsa Convent and for the rest of the north-western region of the country for that matter. On July 23, 1888, the Icon of the Mother of God "Consolation of All the Afflicted", kept in the chapel of the imperial glass works, gained fame. This first, and so far the only miracle-working icon in the northern capital, now practically consigned to oblivion, became so wide spread,



Cemetery Church of St. Nicholas



Master-plan of the Pukhtitsa Convent

that to this day it can be seen practically in every Orthodox home in St. Petersburg, and almost in every rural house of the Arkhangelsk and Vologda regions. It was venerated everywhere—from the royal family to Baltic or White Sea fishermen. In hard times it also brought consolation to the sisters of the Pukhtitsa Convent, and one of its copies, now kept in the cloister, was miraculously found in a hayloft by a local peasant woman in the early 20th century.*

That same year the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of

God was celebrated with particular solemnity in Pukhtitsa. Nearly 9,000 worshippers came for the celebrations, which for the first time were attended by the ruling hierarchy, Bishop Arseny of Riga and Mitava (at that time Estonian parishes were included in the Riga Diocese), who later did much to develop the nascent convent.

Also present at the solemnities were members of the Orthodox brotherhood—Prince Sergei Shakhovskoi, the Governor of Estonia, and his wife, Yelizaveta. Several years later, the prince's zeal and energetic efforts and care for the Orthodox shrine culminated in the redemption of the land on the Hill of the Mother of God and its transfer to the future cloister. He was fond of this place and helped the local community in every way. In 1894, the prince, who died suddenly in the prime of life, at the age of 42, wished to bury him on the Hill of the Mother of God next to his newly-built house, and his will was carried out. His widow outlived him by many years. Never leaving Pukhtitsa, she led a quiet prayerful life, did all she could to help the clo-

ister in its hard times and died in 1939. On the top of the hill there stands the wooden tent-shaped church dedicated to St. Sergy in whose vault the remains of the couple lie buried. Today the St. Sergy Church and the princess's house are within the convent's precinct.

Still, neither the energetic efforts by the governor, nor the favourable disposition of the ruling hierarchy, nor the organizational talent of Mother Varvara could remove all obstacles arising at that time on the road to the formation of a fully fledged monastic community. And then Mother Varvara decided to turn to Archpriest Ioann Sergiev of Kronshtadt who was already known all over Russia.

"I know this place, I've been there. A convent will be there," Father Ioann replied to the applicant. Since that time things went well in the community. In the history of the Pukhtitsa Convent there was a point which places it apart from other cloisters and which was noted in the life of St. Antony of Pechery: many cloisters appeared in Russia not thanks to generous donations but through

* St. Ioann the Righteous of Kronshtadt also venerated this icon. He took an active part in the construction of the St. Petersburg church dedicated to it and consecrated its side chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas. It is significant that in the days when the original name of the city on the Neva was being returned this church was handed over to worshippers, and on November 5, 1991, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, led an All-Night Vigil in this church. On the feast day of the Icon of the Mother of God "Consolation of All the Afflicted" (November 6) His Holiness the Patriarch consecrated a side chapel dedicated to St. Ioann the Righteous of Kronshtadt in St. Ioann's Convent on the Karpovka.

asting and prayer. Yes, Father Ioann did extend a modest monetary help; he also sent some sisters there and visited the cloister himself on many occasions, but who will appreciate in full measure the cares, the feats of abstinence, who will count the tears shed and the petitions sent by several generations of Pukhtitsa sisters? St. Ioann the Righteous of Kronshtadt foresaw that this spot was destined to escape ruin and to maintain the spirit of Russian monasticism over these years, and, with time, also to generously nourish the reviving cloisters with it.

As early as 1891, by decision of the Holy Synod, a Dormition women's community was instituted in Pukhtitsa "with as many sisters as the community will be able to maintain at its own expense". On the feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, Bishop Arseny solemnly inaugurated the community in the presence of Governor S. Shakhovskoi, Ober-Procurator V. Sabler and numerous worshippers. At first it consisted of four persons: Mother Varvara and three girl-postulants. By the end of 1891 the number of postulants had exceeded two dozen, apart from twenty-two orphanage inmates and two medical nurses. There were difficulties, of course, but modest as it was, help came in regularly from all parts. The St. Petersburg Academy of Arts drafted a general plan for the cloister's development. It was not long before a temporary refectory, dwelling houses with cells, and the necessary auxiliary structures were built, trees planted, and the foundations of the holy gates with a belfry laid. A year later, on August 16, Bishop Arseny consecrated the newly-built Church of the Dormition (on the site of the present cathedral), made of wild stone.

On October 23, 1892, on the eve of the feast of the Icon of the Mother of God "Consolation of All the Afflicted", the Holy Synod resolved that the Pukhtitsa women's community be reorganized into a convent and that Sister Varvara be appointed the

mother superior, and be raised to the rank of hegumene.

All these years construction work proceeded apace, the arable area was being expanded and new plots of land developed; the convent acquired its own horses, and engaged in livestock and poultry farming. The number of its sisters reached 140, gold-embroidery, tailor's, shoe-making and icon-painting shops were opened; a continuous reading of the Psalter was introduced. At the same time, it became possible to open metochia in Jevva and Revel as well as a forest cottage for staritsy with a domestic chapel.

On August 16, 1895, Bishop Arseny and Archpriest Ioann of Kronshtadt consecrated a refectory church dedicated to Sts. Simeon the God-Receiver and Anna the Prophetess, where divine services began to be conducted in winter. In 1896 the first parish Church of the Dormition, situated next to the ancient oak, was reconsecrated as a cemetery church in honour of St. Nicholas and St. Arseny the Great. By this time the convent's churches had been decorated with a cypress icon, depicting thirty-two selected saints containing particles of their relics, and six icons sent to the Hill of the Mother of God as a present from the Holy Mount Athos: of the Saviour and of the Mother of God "Swift to Hearken" (full size) for the iconostasis, the Lord Pantocrator sitting on the throne, the Chernigov Icon of the Mother of God, St. Pantaleon the Great Martyr and the locally particularly revered Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God depicting underneath St. Varvara the Great Martyr (the heavenly patroness of the convent's first mother superior), St. Parthenius of Lampascus, St. Ioann of Rila (the heavenly patron of Father Ioann of Kronshtadt). The reverse side of the latter contains a miniature reliquary with particles of the relics of St. Pantaleon the Great Martyr and new Athos martyrs Sts. Euthymios, Ignatios and Acacios.

After five years as the hegumene in Pukhtitsa, Mother Varvara

was sent to restore other cloisters, and in 1897 the reigns of administration went to Hegumene Aleksia Plyashkevich; she took the veil at the Moscow Convent of the Icon of the Mother of God "The Passions" and was indefatigable both in her managerial efforts and spiritual zeal. She expanded the orphanage, school, almshouse, hospital and shops established by Hegumene Varvara, opened an icon-painting school, founded a metochion in St. Petersburg, erected a majestic five-domed Dormition Cathedral. She maintained correspondence with Father Ioann of Kronshtadt, who strengthened and exhorted her in the sorrows and difficulties which fell in abundance to the lot of the convent and the hegumene.

During the First World War the convent's sisters took care of a great number of wounded and orphans. In October 1917, when the front-line approached the convent, Hegumene Aleksia, some of the sisters and the miracle-working icon were evacuated to the St. Peter Convent in Rostov, where they stayed till 1923. On her way back Hegumene Aleksia fell seriously ill and on the fifth day of her return to the convent passed away.

During her almost six-year absence the convent was placed in charge of Sister Ioanna Korovnikova, the convent's treasurer and God-daughter of Father Ioann of Kronshtadt. In 1921 she was raised to the dignity of hegumene and stayed in charge of the cloister till her death on January 16, 1943.

It was a difficult period. The convent was short of funds, its economic activity practically came to a standstill, but the cenobitic rules were strictly observed, its sisters continued to take care of the aged, sick and wretched. But on the eve of the Feast of the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God the Lord granted one more miracle to support the convent's sisters: on the bottom of the holy spring the worshippers could see a sort of mosaic picture of the Mother of God resembling the Tikhvin Icon. The picture "stayed"



Hegumene Varvara II, Mother Superior of the Pukhtitsa Convent of the Holy Dormition of the Mother of God

until the moleben conducted at the spring on the day of the feast. And that same year the old Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God

that hung on the wall of the convent's "bread room", became renewed. Thus the Most Holy Theotokos showed that She did not deprive this holy place of Her protection.

In the tough war years Hegumene Aleksia Golubeva (in schema Sergia) became the mother superior of the convent. She came to the cloister at the age of fifteen when it was administered by Mother Varvara, fulfilled all obediences, was a treasurer for a long time, and in 1946 had to retire for health reasons, taking schema a year before her demise († 1953).

The convent's administration was taken over by Hegumene Ralfaila Migacheva, who came from the nearby village of Syrenets. From early youth she linked her life with the Pukhtitsa Convent and was its mother superior till 1955 († 1961).

In 1955 Mother Angelina Afanasyeva was raised to the dignity of hegumene and administered the convent till 1968. Just as her predecessor, she devoted herself to Pukhtitsa from the age of nineteen († 1973).

These three hegumenes shouldered an incredibly heavy burden:

it was necessary to preserve the convent and monastic life in difficult conditions when the negative attitude of the local and central authorities called for exertion all prayerful efforts so as to withstand slander and temptations, to hold out despite everything, never ceasing to sing praises to God.

The present mother superior of the Pukhtitsa Convent, Varvara Trofimova, has been administering the cloister since 1968. She first came to the Hill of the Mother of God at the age of twenty two on the feast day of St. Serafim of Sarov, fulfilled obediences in Pukhtitsa, the Convent of St. Mary Magdalene in Vilna under the guidance of the staritsy who were reared by the first mother superior, Varvara, and who still remembered the grace-filled meetings with Father Ioann of Kronstadt. In her activity for the benefit of the cloister Hegumene Varvara II combined, as it were, the main traits of her three predecessors: care for sisters and prayers, which was characteristic of Varvara I; extensive building and economic activity which was peculiar to Mother Aleksia; gaining of an obvious prayerful assistance and blessing of St. Ioann the Right-



Hegumene Varvara Blokhina (1892-1897)—founder of the cloister



Hegumene Aleksia Pleshkevich (1897-1923)



Hegumene Ioanna Korovnikova (1923-1943)



*Schemahegumene Sergia Golubeva
(1943-1946)*



*Hegumene Rafaila Migacheva
(1946-1955)*



*Hegumene Angelina Afanasyeva
(1955-1968)*

eous of Kronshtadt, which reminds us of the blessing given to the future Hegumene Ioanna by her famous God-father.

The century-old convent seems to have been given a new lease of life. Everything has been put in order. The convent premises and churches have been repaired, the walls and the cupola of the Dormition Cathedral have been painted, water-piping and central heating installed, new dormitories and numerous auxiliary buildings erected, the stone fence completed, the farmyard, apiary, hotbeds, fields, vegetable gardens modernized and improved. The convent continues to lead a strict monastic life, traditionally combining feats of labour and prayer.

His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II

of Moscow and All Russia takes an active part in the life of the cloister: all his life he maintains a constant prayerful communion with the sisters and Heavenly Patrons of Pukhtitsa. He is the Holy Archimandrite of the Pukhtitsa Convent of the Dormition. In 1986 he consecrated the last of its churches—the domestic chapel at the almshouse, dedicated to St. Aleksy and St. Varvara the Great Martyr.

The Pukhtitsa Convent has received yet another shrine which has become a visible symbol of the 400-year history of the holy place. I mean the icon of the Mother of God painted by the convent's sisters in 1894 for Father Ioann of Kronshtadt. The full-length figure of the Most Pure Theotokos is depicted in blue dress,

standing by the stream, half-turned to praying worshippers against the background of Pukhtitsa hills and forests, just as She appeared to Estonian peasants four hundred years ago, just as She appears also today to some worshippers at the same place, near the spring. After the demise of Father Ioann of Kronshtadt this icon was reverentially kept by one St. Petersburg family and after the war in 1946 was handed over to the convent.

Our land has not grown scarce of shrines. Reaching us over centuries and providentially preserved in the hardest years, they comfort, heal and bless all those who come to them with faith.

A. PARMENOV

"Pastor of truth"—this is how St. Ioann the Righteous of Kronshtadt was called by his contemporaries. An ordinary parish priest, he took upon himself the ordeal of Christ's follower in the years which were very difficult for Russia. This feat consisted in complete self-abnegation in the name of people's salvation. "I'm not my own, I'm God's," Father Ioann used to say. He saved all, came to people's assistance, suffering from the lack of understanding both of his near ones and the clergy. He was not afraid to appear self-opinionated, importunate and even ridiculous, ridding people of the spirit of spite, falsehood and hatred. He knew that somebody must give oneself entirely to people, and he did so.

The Sun of Truth

...from Thee hath shone forth the Son of Truth, Christ our God, Who giveth light to those who are in the darkness (The Troparion on the Feast of the Meeting of Our Lord Jesus Christ)

"The Sun of Truth" is one of the names which, after the righteous St. Simeon, the God-Receiver, the Holy Church gave to our Lord Jesus Christ, Who came to the world to illumine it with the Light of Truth.

The Sun of Truth is the title of a book by Father Ioann Sergiev, Archpriest of the St. Andrew Cathedral in Kronshtadt, who knew both fame and defamation during his lifetime, was showered with favours by the powers that be and gratitude of thousands of people, who was heaped with fabulous donations which through his hands found their way to the hands of countless sick, poor and infirm people... Yet he was immune to both the sin of pride and the sin of covetousness. Aware of his lofty mission, he knew: both abuse and praise were heaped not on him but on the One Whom he represented on this sinful earth.

He was a person whose funeral turned into the most grandiose mournful procession in the first half of the 20th century. From Kronshtadt to Oranienbaum and from the Baltiisky Railway Station in St. Petersburg to St. Ioann's Convent where he was buried, the funeral procession was accompanied by thousands of people and, an astonishing thing!—not a single accident was registered in the resulting crash. However, soon after the funeral Father Ioann's grave was defiled, and the deceased himself was declared as one of the chief enemies of the new government, the memory of whom was most ruthlessly eradicated. Among our contemporaries there are people who, as children, saw or could see him in St. Petersburg's streets, yet for most of our fellow citizens Father Ioann is still an absolutely unknown figure covered with a dark shroud of hushing up. All the more gratifying is the fact that among the clergy, laity and even people who do not reckon themselves among Christians, there are quite a few who calmly and unostentatiously venerate Father Ioann.

Descendants of indigene St. Petersburg citizens have not betrayed the memory of their pastor either. Even in the hardest of times they remained faithful to the officially not recognized prayerful protectors and intercessors—St. Ioann the Righteous and St. Ksenia the Blessed. They remembered them and



Hinged icon depicting St. Ioann of Kronshtadt and heavenly patrons of his family, painted by sister Mitrofanina of the Pukhtitsa Convent of the Dormition

prayed to them. And the two saints, on their part, have been continuing their unceasing prayerful feat, interceding before the Maker, and sometimes also before the earthly authorities, for their fellow citizens and venerators. Thus, worshippers went to the Chapel of St. Ksenia at the Smolenskoye Cemetery, to St. Ioann's Convent on the Karpovka River to pray at the windows of the crypt turned into a civil defence headquarters. Somebody's reverential hand hewed on granite facing an Orthodox cross above the basement window through which pilgrims tried

if only to have a look at the grave dear to their hearts.

On June 14, 1990, Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, elected at the same Local Council which canonized Father Ioann of Kronshtadt, conducted the office of glorification of the righteous man. Eight months earlier, the former St. Ioann's Convent had been returned to the Russian Orthodox Church and through the efforts of the sisters of the Pukhtitsa Convent, headed by Hegumene Varvara and Georgia and under the guidance of the future Patriarch, began to be restored. By the day of the canonization the small church dedicated to St. Ioann of Rila, the Divine Patron of Ioann of Kronshtadt, had been reopened, and the crypt partially restored. But the great upper church dedicated to the Twelve Apostles was still closed, and therefore the glorification ceremony had to be held under the open sky. A platform was constructed by the wall where worshippers had come on the sly in the past. And from this platform the Patriarch, the concelebrating hierarchs, the clergymen's choir and also all the worshippers, who attended the ceremony, for the first time openly glorified the righteous man, calling him righteous: "Saintly Father Ioann the Righteous, pray to God for us!"

Priest... From the Old Testament times to this day we know this image as personified by *Melchizedek king of Salem... and the priest of the most high God* (Gen. 14.18). Both the office for St. Ioann the Righteous of Kronshtadt and the apostolic reading have the following words: *Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec* (Heb. 5.6)—this is how the Holy Church appraises the service of her canonized really God-bearing and true pastors.

Practically every newly-ordained priest acquaints himself with the exhortations on priesthood by one of the most famous fathers of the Church, St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople: "A priest should have a soul that is more pure than the sun's rays, so that he should never be left by the Holy Ghost and that he could say: *Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me* (Gal. 2.20).

Through ordination a priest takes the image of Christ Himself; he assumes part of His glory, His light, and is obliged to bring light, shine and enlighten. All these qualities of "the priest of the most high God" were personified in Father Ioann Sergiev, a Kronshtadt archpriest. "How great a Christian, let alone a Christian priest, is: he is at one with Christ, the Lord and Saviour through the Holy Sacraments!" Father Ioann exclaimed. And being a person of a small stature, with rather poor health and delicate constitution, who did not possess physical strength or a powerful voice, but had a powerful spirit, he performed miraculous acts that were within the powers of only Christ Himself or His loyal disciples.

Father Ioann called his diary, left to posterity for their edification, "My Life in Christ". Indeed, one could hardly imagine him outside a prayerful

communion with God: his feat of cell or public prayer, a prayer over the sick or otherwise afflicted, a prayer at home, in his carriage, in his apartments, on board the ship, was never interrupted for a single minute... An image which is unamenable to artistic description; faith, purity and light that are beyond verbal grandiloquence and artificiality.

I asked one of our archpastors, who has been deeply venerating Father Ioann all his life and who has compiled a church office for him on the instructions of the Church authorities, to tell of the significance of the righteous man for us, for our time. "Very well," the Vladyka replied readily. "We must tell people about this, of course: it's so important, after all!" We arranged about a meeting after the Local Council. We did meet, and... not a single word was said. "We should pray to St. Ioann, read his books. Learn from him to follow Christ." "As for significance?" "Well, all this is said in the Gospel!" And, indeed, St. Ioann the Righteous of Kronshtadt brought nothing new to our earth. He simply followed Christ's commandments and provided a vivid example of how these simple and pure Gospel truths can be embodied in a living man who is almost our contemporary: "The purpose of our life is to unite with God in this life—in faith, hope and love, and in the future one—in all-perfect love."

On the face of it, the life story of Father Ioann is quite ordinary and simple. He was born into a sexton's family in the village of Sura, Pinega Uyezd, Arkhangelsk Province, on October 19, 1829. He was poor in health and poor in studies, but overcame these shortcomings by prayer which he grew accustomed to since childhood. His strongest childhood impressions are linked with his love of, and reverential attitude to, nature as a visible testimony to the Maker's will and power. There was nothing extraordinary in his educational background: the Arkhangelsk Theological School, a Theological Seminary which he finished with flying colours and, as a consequence, enrolment, at public expense, in the St. Petersburg Theological Academy which he graduated from in 1855. Help to his early widowed mother and care for her. Dreams of missionary activity among pagans in Siberia and North America. But upon graduation from the academy he married the daughter of the archpriest of the Kronshtadt Cathedral of St. Andrew, and, as was the custom at that time, succeeds him on this post. The first miracle was not late in coming: when he arrived at the cathedral he found out that it was the very church in which he had seen himself as a priest in his dream when he was a seminarian. And it was to the last days of his life that St. Ioann the Righteous remained a cleric of this cathedral.

From the very first days of his pastoral ministry Father Ioann embarked on a straight and bright road from which he never deviated. Daily celebration of Divine Liturgy, which he made a rule for himself, required an unflinching observance of spiritual and physical purity and an absolute attention to his acts

and thoughts, as well as long daily preparations. No empty talks with friends or visits, no amusements, no rest, no matrimonial joys (by their mutual agreement, he lived with his wife as a brother and sister)—there was no desire or time for all this. Praying and fasting. Fasting and praying. It was a monk's life, in fact, but one that was much harder, not protected by monastery walls, with ascetic feats carefully concealed from people. And all this in the name of Christ, following Him. He was made a pastor and had to be like the Saviour if only in some minor things, to become a true father, instructor, tutor-guide and protector for his own city, his own people. And everyone—from the tsar to the last beggar—needed protection and help.

But the 1917 revolution destroyed the well-established life and, together with it, Holy Russia as well. The wholesale destruction wrought in society—the loss of faith, honour, glory, the sense of duty, love, mercy—gave rise to the October storm. Outwardly life went well, yet these ulcers imperceptibly eroded our country already during Father Ioann's lifetime, and it is only with spiritually open eyes could the whole irreversibility of catastrophic consequences be foreseen. The Kronshtadt of those years was one of the seats of that infection in the immediate proximity to the capital city of St. Petersburg. The place of administrative deportation of vicious elements, slums, begging, drunkenness, robbery; disbelief, non-Orthodoxy, sectarianism, a complete religious indifference... Could one still dream of missionary activity in far away lands when here, literally next door, there were such hopeless and thick paganism, and the most appalling savagery. And so the pastor set to work, returning to people the lost human make-up, i. e., the image and likeness of God.

As is always the case, selflessness, disinterestedness, purposefulness and zealous and daring service of the young priest met with the lack of understanding, provoked envy and mockery on the part of the "enlightened" society, colleagues, reprimands of the highest hierarchs.

It was not long before Father Ioann displayed his gift of miracle working. The atheistic intelligentsia and its press deliberately hushed up these manifestations of God's strength. But many miracles have been recorded and have preserved in the memory of grateful people. To this day the miracles worked by Christian zealots are usually not written about—all this is presented as religious propaganda or obscurantism, yet the miracles performed by present-day magi and sorcerers are given inordinate publicity.

Speaking of the gift of miracle working it is impossible to avoid mentioning the word "daring", which is often recurred in reminiscences of St. Ioann the Righteous of Kronshtadt—prayed daringly, hoped daringly, even behaved daringly. This has nothing to do with the secular audacity; it is the extreme degree of faith, hope, confidence both in the power of prayer and in the fact that not a single appeal

or request is left unheeded by God. It is not unlikely that quite often he was the only person among his flock and the crowd of onlookers who was absolutely sure that he would outstubborn the most stubborn of enemies—the devil, conquer him. And he did! The wife of a former psalm-reader of the St. Andrew Cathedral recalls: "Once a sturdy possessed fellow from Tver Province was brought to Father Ioann. The saintly man began to sprinkle him with holy water and commanded the devil by Christ's name to go out. A yell followed: 'I won't go out!' And Father Ioann said: 'No, you will!' And went on sprinkling. The obsessed calmed down and suddenly rushed to Father Ioann and embraced him. Everyone took fright, but it turned out that the healed man embraced his comforter in a burst of joy." And this was not the only instance when Father Ioann had to resort to "violence" against his patients, which armed "well-wishers" with a cause to accuse the priest of a rough treatment of people.

And here is an example of persistence and hope of a different kind, about which Father Ioann tells himself. "Through the boundless mercy of the Lord and through the prayer of my unworthiness, infants Pavel and Olga, were cured of the spirit of infirmity that possessed them... I went to pray with a daring hope on nine occasions, believing that this hope will not fail me, that if only for my persistence the Lord will grant me what is being asked for, that He will comply with my sinful prayer for the innocent children, that He will pay heed to my efforts, to my prayerful words and see my genuflections... And the Lord did so: He did not put me, a sinful man, to shame. I come for the tenth time and find my infants quite well. I thanked the Lord and the swift Protectress."

In Father Ioann's activity we see not the "miraculous healings" of Chumak, Kashpirovsky and others, who perform miracles over people without God's blessing, but inducement for a conscious involvement and participation of the suffering person in the process of healing, forgiveness, purification. "Do you want to be pure?" "I do." "Repent then!" This method was bequeathed by Christ Himself and His apostles. Here Faith, Hope and Love merge into one: by his faith the priest brings down the Lord's all-healing love on the suffering.

The first fifteen years of Father Ioann's pastoral ministry were marked by lack of understanding, distrust and sometimes even open hostility. But the second period of his life—the period of glory—was even more difficult. Formerly he went to the people in his own town, but now people flocked to him from all parts of Russia. He slept three or four hours a day. Whenever he left his home, the cathedral, or appeared in city streets, in reception rooms of palaces and mansions—he was invariably met and seen off by crowds of people. Thousands of visitors to Kronshtadt, a special post-office opened for his correspondence, vast sums of money donated for charity which he immediately distributed among the

needy, the opening of boarding homes to train young people and employ indigent adults, the opening of an asylum for the poor, the founding of a convent in his native Sura, the opening of its branch on the Karpovka River in the capital city, of a cloister in the Yaroslavl province and of a church in Arkhangelsk; regular trips to St. Petersburg and then also all over Russia to visit those who appealed for help, twenty-five years of teaching work which he eventually had to quit for want of time, preaching and writing activity, and again visits to slums and dens... His glory was a great feat, hard labour in itself. The last years of his life were aggrieved by illness. But, rejecting doctors' prescriptions and drawing strength from Holy Communion, he did not cease to work practically to his last hour. Ten days before his death he celebrated Divine Liturgy, and on December 20, 1908, (Old Style; January 2, 1909—New Style) he peacefully departed on to the Lord, foretelling the day of his demise in advance.

The entire life of the righteous man, whose image is unconventional for this day and age, brings to the limelight, accentuates the topicality of the truth which seems unacceptable for our contemporaries.

The hustle and bustle of everyday life, disorder and social scraps, the motley nature of reforms, shifts and changes, relegation of even the finest slogans and notions to the category of the "isms", which everyone has grown sick and tired of: monarchism, imperialism, idealism, communism, realism and so on and so forth—all this is a result of one single wrong choice.

Where there is Christ there is peace and goodness. Everyone lives and acts for the good, speaks the same language, that is, equally understands and tells the good from the evil. Where there is no Christ, there are struggle, noise, disorder, nervousness, commotion, and two debaters do not hear and do not understand each other, and what if there are more of them: phrases, slogans, flags, mottos, busts, demarches, an active political struggle which we hailed in the "accursed past", which was subsequently brought to naught by a skilful painful method and which is now being revived as a new travesty of human life.

The Lord gave us two commandments. Two is not many. Fulfil them and the world will transform. *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these* (Mk. 12.30-31). This was said by Christ. And this is how Father Ioann interprets these lines: "The purer the heart, the more it is spacious and the more loved ones it accommodates; the more sinful the heart, the closer and narrower it is, the less it is capable of accommodating its loved ones—and this love, which is false into the bargain, is limited to oneself; we love ourselves in things that are unworthy for the

immortal soul: in silver and gold, in voluptuousness, in drunkenness, etc... Avoid this way of life, that life is reduced to following animal promptings and desires, to sleeping, eating, dressing, taking a walk, and again drinking, eating and taking a stroll. Such way of life kills man's spiritual life completely, making him an earthly being, whereas a Christian should be heavenly on earth as well."

Sooner or later, every Christian, even if he or she is properly educated from childhood, experiences his or her own meeting of Christ. And a person either gives Him room in his heart or flees, renounces, blasphemes and defiles. And since the Gospel has been preached all over the world this meeting takes place everywhere: a Christian, atheist, pagan and any other person—should make a choice: where he is and with whom—with Christ or with somebody or something else, outside Him. Father Ioann also had his own personal meeting, and he "put on Christ" for ever.

The righteous man was branded as a monarchist, Black-Hundreder, an arrogant, rude man, a grabber, and what not... We have already said a few words about the last three epithets, but as for the first two... Yes, he was received in the court; yes, Emperor Aleksandr III died in the Lord literally in his arms; yes, he warned against the overthrow of the existing order, foretelling all the troubles and misfortunes which were soon to follow... And this "Black-Hundreder" prayed for all, helped all, and cured all by the name of Christ and prayer. All: the right and the wrong, Orthodox and non-Orthodox, the faithful and pagans, Muslims and Jews. He was simply a Christian who bore witness to Christ abroad, who reconciled everyone and everything. It is believed that a city is "held up" by three righteous persons. But, as history has shown, the whole of Russia was held up by Father Ioann.

For a long time Russia, his native land, was the only country which refused to recognize the saintly miracle worker, the "second St. Nicholas" who was venerated by the Orthodox all over the country. For decades the legacy of the Kronshtadt pastor was hushed up, because the "farsighted" politicians thought that everything written by the righteous man smacked of politics. And yet Father Ioann's works were simply profoundly spiritual, precisely spiritual, and had society not renounced his legacy, the most holy things (just as we also renounced all God's gifts, in the first place, the Holy Orthodox Church), we should not have experienced the spiritual crisis, the abyss of immorality and the orgy of "all-permittedness" in which we have found ourselves.

On June 8, 1990, the Russian Orthodox Church canonized at last Ioann of Kronshtadt. But does this mean that the children of the Church, and, together with them, the rest of the people, have understood and accepted the new miracle worker and are ready to follow his simple and wise advice, and give heed to his admonitions and prophecies? Incidentally, the prophecies have already come true

with regard to us, but the final stop is yet to be put in the history of our country and the history of the human race in general. Do we heed to what we are being warned against, to what we are being suggested, to what we are being called for? Or are our ears open only to false prophets?

What then does this canonization, this official recognition of the righteous man as righteous mean to the present and future generations? If the prophet has been recognized as prophet then hold fast to his fatherly exhortations, be sure not to take a wrong step, for monstrous mistakes committed against the

land of Russia and our people are a result of departure from the Orthodox faith and the prophetic words of Father Ioann who wrote at the turn of the century: "We need general moral purification, a nation-wide profound repentance, we need to replace pagan morals by Christian ones; let us purify ourselves, wash ourselves with tears of repentance, reconcile ourselves with God, and He will reconcile Himself with us!" Is it not this that we are so badly in need of now?

A. PARMENOV

On Church Bells

We would like to tell our readers, in the first place to those of them who use bells in daily church practice, about the basics of the churchbell wisdom, which are indispensable for their correct usage. The formerly huge numbers of church bells have been reduced to naught, through ill intent or by ignorance, so when one is a witness of unworthy attitude to bells (alas, most belfries are neglected), this naturally makes one wonder: "Shall we be able to preserve the remaining ones?"

Let us begin with the attitude to the bell. "If it is endowed with grace, all those that hear its ringing in daytime or at night, shall be encouraged to glorify Thy holy name," says the deacon at the beginning of the rite of the consecration of a bell. This is the only aim which should compell the bell-master and the bell-ringer to do everything they can to attain it. It follows quite clearly from this task that the world outlook of both of them should be in conformity therewith. Bells, and even more so bell-ringing, are always "the state of one's mind expressed in sound" (the shape of the bell will be discussed further on), so the bell-casters and bell-ringers should first of all observe the canonical requirements and should not allow any arbitrariness, until they grasp the beauty and the measure of ringing for the service of God.

Once the consecration rite has been performed, the bell should be venerated in no lesser degree than all the other church holy things.

Prof. Williams of the USA (who wrote the well-known book on church bells) calls Russian bells resounding icons, thus stressing the importance of the bells for the worshippers of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Russian bells are different from the bells of any other people. The difference is both in the sound and in the shape. The traditional shape of the Russian bell is shown in Fig. 1.

The entire shape of the bell is fashioned after the size of its lower, block, part which is the thickest and is $1/14$ of the lower diameter. The upper part of the bell whose shape is close to a cylinder, has a diameter

which equals half of the lower one. This part, ending in the radius of conjugation, passes into a somewhat elevated plane called frying-pan in Russian, holding two or three pairs of ears. The ears are made on either side of the truncated four-sided pyramid with a hole through which the steel bar is inserted to hold the bell. The pyramid bears the entire weight of the bell and is used to attach it to the weight-supporting beam.

The bell is fastened not only at the pyramid but also at its ears. The additional fastening by the ears makes it possible for the bell to stay relatively stationary when the tongue strikes. One should pay attention to arranging the bell in the steeple in a way that would exclude its contact with belfry walls or with other bells or objects. Such contacts may result in cracks.

It should be pointed out that everything in the belfry should be positioned in a precise and reliable manner, particularly so the attachment of the bells and the tongues. The sound of the bell depends to no small degree on the correct suspension of the tongue. This suspension should be relatively soft. The requirement is not difficult to observe when dealing with small or medium-size bells. But it is quite a complex task for a big bell. Strictly speaking, a rigid (metallic) suspension is admissible for heavy bells, but the tongue should be quite well balanced in this case. The aim of the balancing consists in excluding a dynamic reaction when the bell is struck, for this strike load may considerably worsen the sound.

The balancing can be easily checked by touching the tongue, or visually controlling the upper part of the tongue at the point of suspension. If there is a forward shift, the lower part of the tongue should be made heavier. For a backward shift it is the upper part that has to be made heavier. The additional weight is determined by trial and error. The addition itself should have a fixed joint with the tongue. The above is true only when the tongue is of the right weight and is suspended correctly.

I have seen a great number of home-made tongues. As a rule, their quality is poor. With rare

exceptions. They use any material that comes handy, sometimes very strong which is bad for the bell. The tongue should be made of soft steel (for example, St. 3, St. 5). If the tongue of a big bell has been lost, the balancing of the new one should necessarily be calculated. This is a relatively easy job for a mechanical engineer, or else you should come to us.

A few words about how to locate the bell in the belfry. In order to determine correctly the right position of the bell, one should imagine how it radiates sounds. At the initial moment, when the bell is struck, quite a number of simple sounds are heard (10 or more), which make up the total sound of the bell. But immediately afterwards (depending on the weight of the bell), only a few sounds remain, three as a rule. They are the sounds which determine the duration of the toll.

The main tone of the bell (the lowest in pitch) is formed by the oscillations caused by the changed shape of the lower part of the bell from a circle to an ellipse in two mutually perpendicular directions—in the plane of the swinging tongue and in the plane that is perpendicular to it. If we imagine the bell cut by these planes then the lines of intersection will become four meridians representing the lines of the bell's maximum radiation.

The tone that is one higher in the pitch (double frequency of oscillation) is formed in a similar way, but originating from the oscillations of the quasi-cylindrical upper part of the bell. Thus the oscillating bell represents a sounding cross. Hence the condition determining the bell's position in the belfry: the plane of the swinging tongue and the one perpendicular to it should pass through open spans of the belfry.

The next type of oscillation originates in the following way. The lower part of the bell, when struck by the tongue, acquires a shape resembling a triangle if viewed from below, thus forming three lines on the body of the bell (three meridians) of maximum deformation, corresponding to the maximum radiation of the bell in the given frequency. A similar picture of oscillations evolves in the upper part of the bell but on a higher frequency, with the lines of the maximum radiation shifted by 60 degrees with respect to the lower ones. In short, this type of oscillation forms on the body of the bell six meridian bands of radiation.

Corresponding to a still higher frequencies of oscillation is the deformation of the circle into a shape close to a square. This brings about eight lines of maximum radiation.

From this presentation of the bell sound-formation it follows that the Pskov type of the belfry is the best, as exemplified by the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Novgorod, for the bells in such belfries are suspended in open spans, the sound meeting no obstacles.

The pillar-like belfries have wide spans, four or eight in number, as a rule, and the bells, suspended in the spans, are heard quite well. It should be

remembered though that high sounds propagate only in a straight line whereas low sounds may travel bypassing possible obstacles. This is why the heavy bells are located inside the belfry and the smaller ones in the spans so as to cover the required space with the sound of the ringing bells.

At present quite a number of manufacturers try to master the making of church bells. But the work of various cooperatives or enterprises has not resulted yet in the manufacture of good products. The basic mistake consists in the fact that the task is considered solely from the point of view of material production, or at times—from the viewpoint of artistic bronze casting. But it is our conviction that success in this field is impossible without an accumulation of spiritual experience aimed at the formation of Orthodox Cristian mentality.

The bell is first of all a canonical image both in sound and in shape, within the framework of which the master may realize his personality. The heavier the bonds which the bell-caster will put upon himself in following the canon, the more liberated his personality becomes for the attainment of the original goal.

The profile of the bell, the shape of the ears, the ornaments and the inscriptions should be made after the best samples made before the end of the 17th century. This does not mean that there were no properly cast bells afterwards. Of course, there were some. Just to cite the great bell weighing 995 puds cast early in this century for the Cathedral of St. Aleksandr Nevsky in Tallinn.

The Society of Old Russian Musical Culture has set itself to make bells while preserving the traditions of the Orthodox Russian culture, complemented with contemporary means of penetrating into the essence of the phenomena, if such means are beneficial to the Russian Orthodox Church.

An example is provided by the acoustic laboratory set up by the society. Its aim is to conduct research in the acoustics of our old churches which may help in obtaining interesting additional information on church singing of the past centuries in the field of bell acoustics, as well as to obtain material for applied sciences dealing with the analysis of oscillations.

A. SHATROV

The Opening of the Russian Bible Society

The inauguration of the Russian Bible Society took place on November 1, 1991.

The Bible Society in Russia was first established as a Russian branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1812. It was named the Russian Bible Society in 1814 by a decree of Aleksandr I, with the Emperor himself assuming its membership. The Procurator of the Holy Synod, Prince A. Golitsyn, who had initiated the society, was elected its president. Among its active members was Rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Archimandrite Filaret Drozdov, later the Metropolitan of Moscow. The hierarchy and clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church took an active part in the work of the society to disseminate the word of God among the people.

The society, authorized by the Holy Synod, initiated the translation of the New Testament and the Psalter, which was made by the Academy's professors in 1816-1821, and started working on the Russian translation of the Old Testament from the Hebrew masoretic text. The Russian translation of the Eight Books (the Pentateuch and the Books of Joshua, Judges and Ruth) by Prof. Archpriest Gerasim Pavsky came out in 1825.

The society published and distributed the Church-Slavonic Bible, as well as the biblical translations into the languages of the peoples of the Russian Empire. The scope of its work can be illustrated by the fact that within only a year it published and distributed the New Testament with parallel Slavonic and Russian texts in an unprecedented circulation of 111,000 copies.

The society was essentially the first and the only ecumenical organization in Russia. Among its members, in addition to the Orthodox clergy and laity, were the Roman Catholic and the Greek Catholic Metropolitans who resided in St. Petersburg, as well as the Armenian Archbishop, the clergy and laity of the above confessions and the clergy and laity of Protestant confessions.

Unfortunately, the reaction that broke out in the country led to the closure of the society in 1826. The biblical work was stopped to gather strength only in the great reform era of the 1960s.

Now the Russian Bible Society is being revived.

The Bible Society of the Soviet Union (BSSU) sponsored by the Soviet Health and Charity Foundation was registered in January 1990. S. Averintsev, a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, was elected its president. The Bible Societies were also established in Latvia, Armenia, Moldova and

the Ukraine. Work was under way to establish Bible Societies in Byelorussia, Georgia, Estonia and Lithuania.

In February 1990, the North-West Bible Commission was set up in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg). It included official representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and other Christian denominations in the north-west part of Russia, as well as representatives of research institutes and institutions of higher education in the city on the Neva. This commission started preparing new editions of the Russian Bible and biblical literature on the basis of the research and production association "Spiritual Education." In summer 1991, a Bible Centre with a book-store attached to it was opened in St. Petersburg on the initiative of and in cooperation with the United Bible Societies.

The work to coordinate scientific studies and to publish and disseminate the Holy Scripture for the needs of the Russian Orthodox Church is a matter of concern for the Patriarchal and Synodal Bible Commission set up by the decision of the Holy Synod in February 1990. Metropolitan Aleksy of Leningrad and Novgorod, now the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, was appointed its chairman.

The years of 1990 and 1991 saw the establishment of the Byelorussian and the Chuvash Bible Commissions as working organs under the Holy Synod of the Byelorussian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) and the ruling bishop of the Diocese of Cheboksary and Chuvashia. Their primary concern is to prepare modern translations of the Holy Scripture into the Byelorussian and Chuvash languages.

In March 1991, the Bible Societies in the Soviet Union concluded an agreement on cooperation which laid a solid foundation for the development of the biblical work in the country.

The General Conference of the BSSU took place on October 18, 1991. It agreed to transform the BSSU into the Russian Bible Society and adopted the constitution conforming to all the requirements of the United Bible Societies, a world community of over 115 national Bible societies throughout the world, which the Russian Bible Society was offered to join. The conference elected Father Aleksandr Borisov president of the RBS in place of S. Averintsev who had retired.

The renewed Russian Bible Society was opened on November 1, 1991. Among the participants in the ceremony at the Bible House, as the headquarters of the society in Pyatnitskaya St. is called, were His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia and members of the Patriarchal and Synodal

Bible Commission—Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the DECR, Hegumen Innokenty Pavlov and K. Logachev.

Before the meeting began, RBS President, Father Aleksandr Borisov, authorized by His Holiness the Patriarch, performed the rite of the blessing of the house, then opened the meeting with a speech of greetings.

In his speech, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy expressed the conviction that cooperation between the Russian Bible Society and the Bible Commissions would be developed and strengthened, so that the word of God, now accessible to all those who long for it, might indicate the way of following the Lord, and invoked God's blessing upon their common efforts.

Speeches to greet the Russian Bible Society was made by Dr. John Ericson, General Secretary of the United Bible Societies, Ye. Saburov, Russian Federation Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Economics, A. Bychkov, vice-president of the Union of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists and the RBS vice-president, Bishop Andreas Aarflot of Oslo, Primate of the Church of Norway and president of the Norwegian Bible Society, Richard Worthing Davis, representative of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and Dr. James Billington, director of the US Congress Library.

The Russian Bible Society is already full of life. Today it is the major distributor of the Holy Scripture copies sent to our country by the United Bible Societies and some international missionary organizations. In doing so, it gives the priority to the dioceses of the Moscow Patriarchate which incorporate no less than 90 per cent of all Christians in Russia.

At present, the Publishing Department of the Society is preparing an illustrated monthly entitled *The World of the Bible* which will publish scientific and popular articles by Russian and foreign biblical scholars on subjects connected with the study of Holy Scripture, as well as the experience of Bible translation today.

The thirst for the word of God is so great in the country, and the conditions for biblical work were so bad for long decades, that the Russian Bible Society, just as the Patriarchal and Synodal and other Bible Commissions, have a tremendous field for common efforts before them. But the future seems promising already now. Thus, work is under way to establish, in cooperation with the United Bible Societies, a powerful Russian publishing base capable of giving to every family in our country all kinds of high-quality Bible editions, which, in spite of the rapidly worsening economic situation, will be available to all those who long for them; for truly, *man shall not live by bread alone* (Mt. 4.4). Much effort is still to be exerted to prepare the editions that will make the Holy Scripture understandable for ordinary readers and useful for those who study theology or work in the field of Bible studies and translations.

The word of God is awaited not only by the Christian peoples in Russia and the neighbouring republics, but also by those who have not yet been enlightened with the light of the truth of Christ. May this good opportunity for sowing the good seed in the field of human hearts not be missed! May the Lord bless all those who have come out to work in His field, and may their work yield bounteous shoots!

Hegumen INNOKENTY Pavlov

Meeting with the Leadership and Staff of United Bible Societies

On October 24 His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, Chairman of the Patriarchal and Synodal Bible Commission of the Russian Orthodox Church, had a meeting in Durham with the leadership of the United Bible Societies—UBS General-Secretary, Dr. John Ericson, and senior officials

of the UBS European Regional Centre.

Discussed were questions of cooperation between the Patriarchal and Synodal Bible Commission and the Russian Bible Society (former USSR Bible Society), in particular, the opening of the "Bible House" in Moscow.

Meeting of the Conference of European Churches Presidium

On October 24, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy, in his capacity of Chairman of the Presidium and Consultative Committee of the Conference of European Churches, opened the meeting of the Presidium consisting of eight leading representatives of different confessions. Orthodox Churches are represented by two more members of the Presidium (presidents): Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland (Constan-

tinople Patriarchate) and Metropolitan Antony of Transylvania (Rumanian Orthodox Church).

Opening the session Patriarch Aleksy made several remarks and then handed over his duties as chairman at the working sessions to Vice-Chairman John Arnold, Dean of the Durham Cathedral, at whose invitation the 1991 year meeting of the Presidium was taking place.

In the course of three days, discussed were issues of the current work of the Conference, situation within the Churches of the European continent—the new possibilities and new difficulties facing them, as well as joint efforts in the sphere traditional for the organization, that of reconciliation.

The situation in Yugoslavia causes deep concern. In July the CEC initiated a series of consultations in that country with the aim of giving a possibility for the CEC-member Churches (Serbian Orthodox Church, Lutheran and Reformed Churches) to meet with the Roman Catholic Church at a round table. In spite of a number of urgently and firmly made efforts, the round table was not to be convened. Acting further in this direction, the Presidium suggested at its current session that a CEC Presidium and Consultative Committee delegation be sent to Yugoslavia to support member Churches in the country with manifestations of prayerful solidarity of European Christianity, and try to insist on a round-table meeting between the sides involved in an armed conflict.

An address of greeting to the Madrid Peace Conference on the Middle East was accepted with an appeal to Christians, Judaists and Moslems to labour and pray so that ways to reconciliation and justice may be found.

Reports were heard of the Orthodox members of the Presidium on heterodox expansion into the traditionally Orthodox sphere of action. Taken into account were relevant facts adduced by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II, and the decisions of the Holy Synod and an assembly of hierarchs accepted at their meeting in Zagorsk during the celebration of the Feast of St. Sergy of Radonezh not to send an observer from the Russian Orthodox Church to the forthcoming Synod (Council) of European Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church to avoid false impression of an agreement of Orthodoxy with the manifestations of the strategy and tactics of Roman Catholicism at the present stage.

At the same time, the CEC Conference chaired by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II approved the list of conference members appointed by the CEC-member Churches to take part in the fifth European ecumenical encounter between CEC representatives and the Council of (Catholic) Bishops' Conferences of Europe (CBCE) to be held on November 13-18, 1991, in Santiago de Compostela (Spain). The CEC delegation was to include a representative of the Russian Orthodox Church. The theme of this all-European meeting generally sponsored by the two above-mentioned organizations is mission and evangelization in the modern secularized Europe. All crucial and urgent questions of Christian enlightenment of Europeans are supposed to be discussed there. The Conference of European Churches has just concluded a series of three research consultations on the mission of Churches in secularized Europe. The third CEC consultation recently concluded at the Orthodox Academy in Cyprus called the Churches in particular to confront the indifferent attitude to faith with practi-

cal cooperation in serving society and with prayerful regeneration. One of the themes at the fifth European ecumenical meeting will be the result of the many-years activity of the CEC in the sphere. The forthcoming discussions will specify the understanding of the mission by different Christian traditions and deal with the problem of proselytism in our day when different Churches and new religious movements initiate actions in Central and Eastern Europe as if these regions had no Churches of their own or traditionally established Churches that remained true to Christianity in the crucial years of persecution.

The CEC Presidium also discussed the preparations made for the X General Assembly to be held in Prague in September 1992 (the last was held in 1986 in Stirling, Scotland, and was chaired by future Patriarch Aleksy II). The theme of the assembly—"God unites. In Christ—a new creation" and the working schedule will be discussed by 380 delegates from all countries of Europe. There will be approximately many observers and official guests. The number of participants, the press included, is expected to amount to 1,000. The opening ceremony is to take place in Old Town Square in Prague. The Presidium approved to new project of training and education for people who wish to help refugees in different parts of the continent.

Approved also was the report of the group of representatives of European Churches who control the Helsinki process. The aim of the group is to keep CEC-member Churches informed. The recent major event of the kind was the CSCE Moscow Conference on human dimension of cooperation and security in Europe. There CEC coordinated the work of 18 representatives of European Churches.

The latest positive changes in Europe opened new opportunities for the CEC member Churches. At the same time, processes under way in national economies in many countries of Central and Eastern Europe not only made the work of the Churches in regenerating the old and building the new economically more difficult, but also caused new obstacles on the road of all-European cooperation among Churches of different countries. Half of the CEC members in these continents encounters ever more serious problems in their participation in the conference activity connected with the international initiatives, for it involves hard currency. A few years ago CEC set up a fund of development and compensation for the purpose to make the solution of the problems easier. Nevertheless the participation of the Eastern half of the conference members becomes ever more difficult, and the CEC Presidium called the Churches from countries with a more stable financial system for economic cooperation.

A number of issues of the life of Churches and societies in Europe was also discussed.

In the evening of October 26 His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II left Durham for London.

From October 24 to 26 His Eminence Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad and His Grace Bishop Yelefery of Chimkent and Tselinograd were

guests of the CEC Presidium. Together with His Holiness they met with the Orthodox residents of the North of the British Isles, and were also introduced into different forms of social service of Anglican Christians in Durham and its environs in the sphere of science, secular and religious education and inde-

pendent economic activity.

In the course of the visit of His Holiness to Great Britain, representatives of the Church of England did their best to offer the high guests opportunities to know different forms of Christian contribution into everyday life of modern society.

Third Theological Seminar

On September 23-25, 1991, the third theological seminar of teachers and students of Theological Schools of the Russian Orthodox Church and theological faculties of the Evangelical Church in Germany took place at the Moscow Theological Academy.

Within the framework of the general theme: "Justification, Sanctification, Theosis in the Orthodox and Lutheran Understanding" the following theses were read: B. Weyel—"Unity with Christ: on the Epistle to the Galatians 2, 2"; P. Flogaus—"Deification in the Theology of Martin Luther"; Pastor Schneider—"The Sacrament of Baptism in the Lutheran Understanding"; B. Julius—"Justification and Deification: Contribution to Ecumenical Dialogue"; C. Gestrich—"Iconoclasm and Worship of Icons"; Father M. Glagolev—"The Essence of the Orthodox Asceticism"; Deacon A. Musin—"Dogmatic and Historico-Theological Aspects of the Teaching on Deification"; P. Grezin—"Deification for Human Reason"; V. Cagatic—"Deification as Justification and Sanctification".

A discussion that followed passed in an atmosphere of frankness and fraternal mutual understanding which made it possible to clarify the Orthodox and Lutheran position on the above-mentioned themes.

The sides agreed to continue cooperation of theological faculties in Germany and the Theological Schools of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Prof. C. Gestrich informed the gathering that the next seminar is planned for the second half of 1992 and extended a preliminary oral invitation to the representatives of the Theological Schools of the Russian Orthodox Church.

When the seminar was completed, on September 25, farewell dinner was given in honour of its participants at the Moscow Theological Academy. Archimandrite Venedict Knyazev, MTA pro-rector and Prof. C. Gestrich exchanged speeches. Present at the dinner were representatives of the MTA faculty.

On the next day the group left for Berlin.

Consultation on Training Clergymen for Work with Refugees in Central and Eastern Europe

On September 29-30, 1991, in Cartigny, Switzerland, a consultation was held on the problem of training clergymen for work with refugees in Central and Eastern Europe. The consultation was organized by the European Churches Working Group on Asylum and Refugees (ECWGAR), and emigrants within the framework of joint efforts of the CEC and WCC. The first meeting of the kind was to study the possibilities and support of the Churches and Church organizations in their work with refugees. It was noted that especially prominent today are two streams of emigration: from Central and Eastern Europe and from the South (primarily from the Third World countries) to Central, Western and Eastern Europe. The participants presumed that in future, especially with the enactment of the Single European Act, embra-

cing 12 West-European states and envisaging a reform of their economic and political structures, these states would limit the access of refugees and emigrants. This, in its turn, would provide for a greater flow of refugees to the Central and Eastern Europe. In this context, and considering a more frequent manifestation of racism and xenophobia in many countries, European Churches should, in cooperation with public and non-governmental organization, contribute to the course of rendering aid to refugees. With this aim in view, a programme was worked out to train church workers for the purpose.

The Russian Orthodox Church was represented at the consultation by M. Nelyubova, study secretary at the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Following Orthodox Traditions

For the 25th Anniversary of the Children's Orthodox Camp in Normandy, Korsun Diocese

An avalanche of vices and evil, destroying human personality, swoops on every man who comes to the world. How can the mounting process of devastation of the human soul, defiling man's thoughts and feelings, be stopped? How can the goodness granted by the Maker to everyone of us be preserved?

These questions are of vital concern to all people no matter where they live—in the West or in Russia. Education in the Orthodox spirit is a complex and self-sacrificing task.

The special position of a Western Orthodox parish, functioning in the Catholic surrounding, could not but influence the quest for new approaches to the education of children of Russian origin in the spirit of the Orthodox doctrine and Russian culture. Back in the late 1930s—the early 1940s, a children's Orthodox camp appeared in France whose main task was to use school vacations to initiate small children and juveniles into the faith of their forefathers, the spiritual and cultural legacy of the Motherland left by their parents and grandparents for various reasons.

At different times the camp functioned in different parts of France. But in 1966, with the support of the Moscow Patriarchate and Metropolitan Antony of Surozh, the then Exarch to Western Europe, a plot of land was bought in Normandy. From that time the children's church camp is located in a small town of Hauteville, Normandy, a mere mile from the English Channel. Fresh air, sea-bathing, abundance of flowers and greenery attract young town-dwellers to this place.

The camp has three two-storey grey granite buildings, with six cosy and comfortable rooms which are occupied by 40 children. Each room has its own name: "Fairy Tale", "Stars", "Chicks", "Outer space", "Magic Garden" and "Victory". Children are divided into small groups, depending on their age and sex. As always, last summer the boys and girls who came to the camp included not only pupils of the Paris parish school*, but also children from provinces and some other countries: Belgium, Germany, Russia. They differed in age: from three to fourteen. Most of the children who spend their vacations in Hauteville know each other for several years already, which enables them to live as one closely-knit family, without noticing the difference in age.

In the camp there is a church dedicated to the Iberian Icon of the Mother of God. It has a beautiful iconostasis painted by monk Grigory Krug († 1968)

and icons presented by the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate for the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus. The children's choir, the boys taking turns in attending to various needs in the sanctuary, create a special atmosphere during prayers. Children's lips utter the words of Life Eternal. Looking at these cheerful children one involuntarily recalls the words from the Holy Writ: *My son, from your youth up choose instruction, and until you are old you will keep finding wisdom. Come to her like one who plows and sows, and wait for her good harvest. For in her service you will toil a little while, and soon you will eat of her produce* (Sir. 6. 18-20).

On Great Feasts and Sundays Divine Liturgies are celebrated and, on the eve, All-Night Vigils conducted in the church. Children and teachers regularly receive Holy Communion. Thus, the camp dwellers should be regarded not only as a closely-knit family but also as a united Orthodox community. Guests from among the Orthodox who come to nearby Normandy towns for summer also attend divine services in the church.

Every day at 8 a. m. children hurry for the routine ceremonial line-up. When the white-dark-blue flag with the Orthodox cross embroidered on it is being hoisted, everyone sings the hymn "Glory be to the Lord in Zion..." Thereupon a brief morning prayer and a Gospel lesson for the day are read in Russian and French.

Classes in circles begin at 10 a. m. The traditional subjects are catechism and the Russian language. However, the study of the latter is never reduced to memorizing the rules of declension and conjugation: knowledge is acquired indirectly, through personal contacts, learning verses and poems by heart or during the games. Children are taught by professional instructors equipped with various teaching methods. Teachers, invited from Russia, who do not speak French, are extremely helpful in developing Russian oral practice: children are simply compelled to talk to them in Russian. Last year, for instance, working in the camp were two teachers from Russia: N. Ponomaryova, a lecturer at one of the St. Petersburg higher educational establishments, and A. Kravchenko, a teacher at the Sunday school at the Moscow Epiphany Cathedral.

An invisible but perceptible contact with the Motherland is maintained also thanks to the fact that a priest comes to the Russian Orthodox camp from Russia for seven years in succession. Last July Father Aleksandr Kuzin, was sent to Hauteville from the Kaluga Diocese. In August, both the pupils

* See: L. Levandovskaya. The Russian Parish School in Paris. JMP, 1990, No. 8, pp. 44-46.

and teachers received spiritual guidance from Hegumen Aleksandr Yelissoy, rector of the Holy Trinity Church in Vanves (near Paris) and of the Holy Spirit Skete in Menil-Saint-Denis. From 1988 he has been coming to the camp for Easter and summer vacations where his mission is never limited to conducting divine services alone. During the academic year he teaches catechism at the Russian school run by the Church of the Three Holy Hierarchs. Therefore Father Aleksandr knows quite well some of the children from the Orthodox camp who attend the parish school in Paris. In the camp he also conducts catechetical classes; children come to him with their problems, and teachers turn to him for advice. No venture is undertaken without the clergyman's blessing.

Last year it was decided to organize a circle within the framework of the course of catechism in which the children were acquainted with the life of St. Serafim of Sarov. The classes were conducted by A. Kravchenko.

...At noon a small bell, hanging near the dining room, summons the children for dinner, which is followed by rest-hour. At half past two p.m. the local radio network begins to transmit Russian folk and children's songs, which means that the rest-hour is over.

If weather is fine everyone goes to the beach. Children are fond of bathing in the English Channel. When bathing was postponed because of the ebb, various contests and games were arranged on the glade.

All those who come to Hauteville can go in for sports: running, tennis, football, horse-riding, swimming, table tennis. Besides, the camp organizes picnics, outings, excursions to various museums, zoos and even other cities. Last summer smaller children went to a cockle-shell museum, an exhibition of dry flowers, a zoo, visited the towns of Koutans and Granville. Video taped animated cartoons in the Russian language shown in the camp are a treat for the children.

Last summer boys and girls holidaying in the camp learned the art of bell ringing from A. Kravchenko. By far not all Orthodox parishes in France (especially within the city limits) can boast of a fine belfry like the one in the Normandy camp. The young bell-ringers, who have accustomed chiefly to the ringing of Catholic churches, learned how to ring in the Orthodox manner and familiarized themselves with various kinds of bell ringing.

After the evening prayer the children go to bed, but the day is not yet over for their instructors and teachers. In the evenings they assemble in the dining room for a traditional cup of tea where they meet with a priest. They discuss with him problems of the past day and set plans for the next day. The discussion usually lasts till the small hours when its participants retire to their rooms.

The theatre occupies an important place in the life of the camp. In the course of the several decades since the opening of the Orthodox camp it has staged

hundreds of classical Russian plays. Last summer N. Ponomaryova produced *The Tale of the Dead Tsarevna and Seven Giants*, *The Scarlet Flower*, *Tsarevna-Frog*. The camp now has not only its own producers but also authors of edifying shows. Thus, last summer eleven-year-old Aleksandra Bitun wrote a small play which she successfully staged herself.

As a rule, children who come to Hauteville in August take part in repair work: they paint window frames, wicket-gates, varnish doors, tie up trees, clean candlesticks in the church, polish floors, and, in general, prepare their home for winter.

But the Orthodox camp also has its own holidays: the special feast, the parents' day, and the "bonfire". On the special day the children and their teachers put on colourful costumes and present a theatrical show under the open sky. On the day they meet with their parents boys and girls rehearse concert items, present a play or show, learn poems and songs by heart. The "bonfire" is arranged on the glade: boys bring firewood and kindle the fire, while the girls prepare supper right outdoors. Children gather round the bonfire and sing Russian folk songs. Neighbouring kids watch all this through the fence without concealing their curiosity. On the eve of the departure from the camp an evening of modern dances, games and humour is arranged.

People who have linked their lives with the camp and the Russian parish school deserve much credit. Nina and Lyudmila are favourites of children. Working together with them now are also their former changes—Elyzabeth Bitun, Tatyana Levandovskaya and Mary Mai. Yesterday's pupils—Anka and Boris—have also "tried their hand" as tutors and instructors and not without success. Thus, there are people who can and should carry on the mission which was started several decades ago. One may think that the camp is a place of recreation for children, teachers and the priest. Alas, this is not so. On the contrary, people who decide to spend summer in this camp as teachers or tutors, give all their energy, knowledge and abilities to this difficult and at the same time very useful task. It is not for nothing that parishioners of the Church of the Three Holy Hierarchs say in jest that a summer spent in the camp in the capacity of teacher may equal equivalent to a whole year of life on Mount Athos. May the Lord strengthen the spiritual and physical forces of all those who promote the education of the rising generation in the spirit of Russian Orthodox traditions, faith and piety.

A. KRAVCHENKO,
teacher at the Sunday school run by
the Epiphany Cathedral in Moscow

Discourses on the Lord's Prayer

Discourse II: On the First Petition of the Lord's Prayer Hallowed be thy name (Mt. 6.9)

In fact, the aim and task of the coming of our Saviour to the world was to glorify the name of the Father, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. That is why He prays after this manner: *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them* (Jn. 17.25-26). Our Saviour, in putting His whole soul into this first petition, wants His disciples to do the same; for His first and foremost desire is that we pray to glorify the name of God our Father.

Our praise and worship cannot of course make the name of God holier than it is. On the other hand, our sins, blasphemy, irreverence and abuse cannot desecrate Him or make Him less holy. Indeed, can the sun lose any of its force if foggy clouds obscure its light? In this case the only thing we can feel is a want of light and warmth, but the sun itself remains the same, emanating its rays behind the clouds. Or, can a precious stone be damaged by your throwing it into mud and dust? If there is a damage, it is only for you yourself, while the stone itself remains what it was, preserving all its precious qualities. So it is here. The name of God will not lose anything of its brightness even if abused; but what we ask Him is to keep its brightness also among us so that among us as well, in our holy life, it may be glorified in its greatness and power, wisdom and goodness, truth and love.

Now think in what sense exactly should we use these words of the Lord's Prayer: *Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name?* These are essentially the words of praise and reverence before the greatness and grace of our God. From this earthly valley of sorrow and misery, from this abyss of sin and evil I raise my eyes up to my Heavenly Father, to God, Who through His Word has proclaimed His Name throughout the Universe. My soul is filled with a

deep feeling of love, reverence, gratitude and worship and moves by it. O God, my Creator and Lord, unto Thee I cry! What is Thy creature before Thee, Immeasurable and Inscrutable God? What am I? I am no more than an earthen worm, a trivial insect. Thou sayest a word—and worlds appear; Thou withdrawest Thy spirit—and these worlds perish, turning into Thy finger! Yet Thou art so close, O God, so feesably close to us; through Thy power in our weakness and Thy grace in our sin we dare to draw even closer to Thee, appealing to Thy heart with our prayers, and asking Thee as loving children ask their father: *Our Father...* Can we thank Thee enough for having honoured us with such paternal love that we even dare to join our children's prattle to the heavenly dwellers' choir worshipping Thee at the throne of Thy glory? May not our souls tire of glorifying Thy name, neither our mouths of praising Thee, O God, as long as we exist; may Thy name be always hallowed among us as well!

Such, brethren, should be our thoughts and feelings when we utter these words of the Lord's Prayer. Such were without doubt the thoughts of our Saviour when He taught His disciples to pray with these words. It is evident that those whose hearts are not filled with such thoughts and feelings while saying this prayer will never make the Lord's Prayer ring true.

But what a gloomy picture appears before our eyes when we look at the moral condition of the human world! How far it is from that honour which behaves our God and that glory which He expects from His creation! Millions of people do not know of Him, their Father; their lips do not utter a single word of praise or thanksgiving or worship of their God. The Christian world as well, the world to which He has revealed His paternal name and which is called to glorify Him, what is its feverish chase after the wisdom, happiness and riches of this world directed at? What is its rush for success in every science and art, in external welfare and comforts, motivated by? To whose honour and glory is all this accomplished? Is it to the honour and glory of the One to Whom all honour and glory belong and from Whom every good blessing and every perfect gift come? Is it accomplished to glorify the Father of light and His paternal love and to hallow His name? Or is it rather done by man for

his own honour, for his own name? Do not today's people say as the Babilonians once said: *Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth* (Gen. 11.4).

Now turn away from the external world, my friend, towards your internal world; look into your own heart to see how far your own life is directed to the glorification of your God and His Holy Name. All that you say or do, is it done in the name of Lord Jesus and in gratitude to God the Father? Does your whole life ring with this tone alone: Not to us, not to us, but to Thy Name, O Lord, give glory? Or your life is rather built on different principles, and your actions and deeds have different aims and motivations? After so many instructive manifestations of the power, wisdom and goodness of your God in your life, is there still a place in your soul for incredulity, unbelief and discontent? After so many irrefutable revelations of your powerlessness and sinfulness, is there still a place in it for self-justification and stubborn pride? After so many cherished moments of blissful communion with God in the sacraments of the Church and of good determination to live for Him alone and for His glory and to cherish His name, do you still have so much self-love and indulgence of the flesh and so little filial

faithfulness to God and brotherly love for your neighbours? Should not He in this case answer us, when we appeal to Him with the words *Our Father, which art in heaven*, in the same way as He once answered to His people of Israel: *A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?... For my name shall be great among the heathen, ... but ye have profaned it.* (Mal. 1. 6, 11, 12).

Thus the words *Hallowed be thy name* are not only an expression of our glorification of the Heavenly Father, but also an expression of our sincere and humble prayer in which, confessing with grieving heart before the Heavenly Father that His Name has not yet been glorified on earth as it behaves Him, we ask Him to put an end to our dishonour and abuse of His name and to help all people through His grace to acknowledge and appreciate His paternal love for them and glorify it through their devoted life full of filial faithfulness to Him.

May the Lord bless us and enlighten us with His light, so that our light, too, may shine before people for them to see our good works and glorify our Father which art in heaven! Amen.

Metropolitan VLADIMIR Bogoyavlensky

Filial Love as Foundation of Humanity

N. Fedorov on the Essence of Christianity

"Our Father, God of our fathers the living and not the dead, grant us to become instruments worthy of Thy Holy Will, undesiring the ruin of anyone, but that all may come to know the Truth, in order not to live for oneself, not for gain, not in struggle with those like us, not for mutual destruction, and not for others living also for themselves, for their mutual constraint and ousting. Grant us, when we become Thy instruments, to live with all the living for the sake of all the dead, so that for us, sons, the fathers among the dead may become living, so that we, made in Thy likeness, may become like Thee, so that the Sacraments administered in the church become real outside the church. Amen." (2, p. 12).

In this heartfelt prayer, which occupies a special place in N. Fedorov's works, formulated in a few words is the teaching on the universal paternal cause of mankind and at the same time with what profound cordial feelings the prayer is imbued! Just imagine, if from all that was written by Fedorov only this prayer for universal salvation had survived, then by it alone all his teaching could have been restored. It is impossible to doubt the profound Christian spirit of this prayer. It leaves no doubt of the fact that filial love, raised up to all-human sonship, having its image and likeness in Divine Sonship, in the love of the Son of God for the Heavenly Father, spoken of in the Gospel According to St. John, is according to Fedorov, the foundation and crown of Christianity's universal paternal cause. However, the fact that filial love is the essence of Christianity and the cornerstone of universal paternal cause seems to have been insufficiently understood in Fedorov's religious-philosophical heritage.

To some critics of the thinker it seemed that Fedorov "re-interpreted" Christian symbols according to his ideas. We are convinced, however, that it was not Fedorov who re-interpreted the Christian images, but his opponents who imagined that Christianity for him was only a form of expression, and not the essence of his soul. Otherwise it is quite incomprehensible why Fedorov in an age of deep decline in religion, had to clothe in Christian forms and Orthodox imageries his speeches addressed to scholars that is, to those in whom religion in general, Orthodoxy in particular, enjoyed the least respect. However, it will not be difficult to understand this if we recognize

that Christian symbols express the very essence of the universal paternal cause to participation in which Fedorov urged the scholars.

Filial love which, Fedorov thinks, forms the foundation and crown of Christian paternal cause, is the determining feature of the thinker's character. He writes of children's feeling of love for their parents maintaining that filial love is the basis of a child's character, derived from his own childhood's experience which in adulthood became formulated in the teaching on resurrection. "A child, who does not yet understand ranks, or dignities, or their distinguishing marks which have become established outside the Kingdom of God and which have destroyed relations of kinship, and establishes his own relationship with everyone without distinguishing positions or not knowing any outside that kinship is ready to serve all without considerations of profit or gain, without any partiality; a child with such qualities makes it clear to the disciples why the Kingdom of God belonged to children and in what they, adults, must be like children in order to become members of this Kingdom; to be like children is to become a son of man or to be reborn again as one (3, p. 116). By reading these lines we can picture to ourselves Nikolai Fedorov, whose selfless readiness to come to the aid of anyone who turned to him was generally known. And when we read the following: "He Himself was the model pointed out by Christ to His disciples to the highest degree; as an adult He preached that which He was in childhood" (3, p. 117), we discern in the image of Christ the face of His servant.

It was precisely faith in the Holy Trinity as the Model for mankind's life and faith in the Resurrection of Christ which is indivisible from faith in the universal resurrection, Orthodox Faith, that gave Fedorov the answer to the most secret yearnings of his soul. "Having from youth concentrated all his hope and trust in the words of the Saviour: *That they all may be one* (Jn. 17.21), in them alone finding consolation under existing discord, venerating the Holy Trinity in this very sense, and having learned not to separate dogma from commandment" (1, p. 32), Fedorov with his whole being accepted Orthodoxy. Gaining such faith, he could not separate in his soul Christ's Resurrection from universal resurrection; neither does the Orthodox Church separate them, as we can see not only from the Easter prayers and

hymns, but even from the prohibition to commemorate the dead and the burial of the newly departed during Easter Week, in the hope of their resurrection with the Risen Christ. And Nikolai Fedorov in childhood and adolescence, every Easter with everybody who believed humbly as a child, very likely awaited with joyful emotion that our fathers and grandfathers would rise there and then, and that we too would be changed and join them in eternal happiness. But the Easter Week passed and the dead did not rise. It is impossible to express in words the grief and disappointment felt by the child. His entire being was burdened with the question: "How can it be understood, or imagined that Christ's Resurrection was not followed by the resurrection of all?" (1, p. 208). He could not comprehend Christ risen only for Himself, for His own glory, just as he could not comprehend a lonely God, without a Son, requiring the praises of slaves and not sons. "Christianity," Fedorov writes, "would not have been Christianity, that is, world love, and Christ would not have been the Son of man... and would not have been completely incomprehensible, if the link between the Resurrection of Christ and universal resurrection had been broken" (ibid.). To Fedorov it was revealed that the Son of man, Who is the embodiment of filial love, demands from the sons of men similar love for their fathers. The thinker was true to his revelation all through his life. He understood that our duty was to pray for the resurrection of our fathers because their death was not only a consequence of sin and the result of the action of Nature's impersonal law, but a consequence of the action of man's evil will, although we are unaware of it and accept it as the action of Nature's objective law. If we had unconsciously pushed our fathers out of life, they cannot return to life without our consciousness and will, otherwise our guilt before them will not be atoned. Unawareness of guilt, for a being given consciousness only deepens it. And that in why if the fathers do not resurrect the blame is only in the sons. We have been called upon by God to realize the full depth of Original Sin, that is the fact that every death in essence is an assassination, and that the dead, that is, the killed, are not strangers but our brothers and fathers, whom we must love with an effective and creative love. Having realized the sin of involuntary assassination of our near ones, we must become instruments of God's will in the sacred cause of universal resurrection. Nikolai Fedorov writes: "In order to recognize the duty of resurrecting, there is no need for free discussion nor for anyone's authority; it is only necessary to preserve a child's feeling, a pure heart" (1, p. 356). We the sons born, "must understand that birth is the acceptance, the taking of life from our fathers, that is, depriving the fathers of life, hence the duty to resurrect the fathers, which gives the sons immortality" (3, p. 476).

Only sincere love for our fathers and the consequent duty to them makes the teaching of Fedorov not only comprehensible but acceptable. But even for many of

those who knew him well and considered themselves his followers, the pathos of this filial love proved to be inaccessible. This precisely was the reason why they could not continue worthily his work and in most cases perverted his idea in one way or another. Thus V. Soloviev, who admired the teaching of Fedorov, although he recognized love for our fathers as the source of our faith in God, could not assimilate the idea to the end and make it his own. This is borne out, in particular, by the fact that he thanked the fathers not because he was alive, but because he was born in a civilized country and in a cultured environment. Filial love remained for him a manifestation which he observed from outside rather than from within, otherwise he would not have thought it similar to the attachment of an animal to its master (4, p. 129). In regard to these ideas of Soloviev, Fedorov notes: "According to the Gospel in the foundation must be put a child's, a son's and daughter's love, a love without fear and lust, without identifying it with veneration, nor putting it below compassion and shame, and, of course, without ascribing to animals that feeling which survives childhood and which manifests itself in commemoration so that death itself does not limit it" (2, p. 164).

Extremely attractive to many seemed the fact that Fedorov did not propagandize his way of life, from which they naively concluded that his teaching could be attained without spiritual effort. Fedorov, in fact, did not propagandize his way of life for the reason that he considered his own spiritual feat too imperfect to set it forth as a model, because for us the perfect model is one—the Lord Jesus Christ. For the same reason he avoided actual preaching of his convictions considering himself too unworthy and in Christian humility shunned worldly fame. Moreover, Fedorov's idea was that for the preservation of a child's feeling, everything was already revealed in Christ's Gospel. He writes: "For the sons of departed fathers or ancestors, what is proper is, unquestionably, what is desired, one's own, easily and necessarily discerned by sons, and therefore there is no need for a new prophet..." (2, p. 173).

Strict self-restriction, as a result of comprehending the deep inner unity with all men, Fedorov considers as not only possible but absolutely necessary, as a means of union in the universal paternal cause. He writes in particular: "Any, even necessary, use of themes others are devoid of, is already a violation of Christian love, unity of humanity, a violation of the very first and basic dogma, the Trinity dogma, which is looked upon as a commandment. Restriction, self-restraint should take place in our days not out of the wish to be like gods, who have no needs as Socrates said, but out of a sense of closeness and likeness to all men" (3, p. 255). The most important Christian task as he saw it was to make the spiritual feat of a few the feat of all; the monastic feat, the world's feat; and the contemplative feat, the feat of the universal paternal cause.

The demands made by Fedorov on man seemed

unreal to many. Nevertheless, they necessarily proceeded from the lofty conception of the Christian God—God of our fathers, which Fedorov carried in his heart. He could not admit the thought that the God of our fathers could have made the world in its present form, and that was why responsibility for its state he ascribed solely to man's fault. The idea of mankind's responsibility for evil reigning in the world, precedes the idea of duty, one of the focal and beloved ideas of Fedorov, one of the leitmotifs of the teaching on resurrection. Thus, for instance, he writes: "Instead of seeing the cause of our limitedness in mutual enmity and disagreements, especially in allotting knowledge and actions to special estates, we ascribe to God the concept of creating limited creatures and leaving them forever in that state. But for the creation of limited beings there is no need of omnipotence, nor of omniscience, not even of love" (3, p. 124). In this and similar thoughts there sounds a profound Christian conviction, completely identical with the frame of mind which had produced the greatest words in all Holy Scripture: *God is love* (1 Jn. 4. 8, 16).

* * *

For hundreds of years Christians have repeated the sacred formula-names: God the Father, God of our fathers, Son of God, Son of Man, but it was never defined fully that in these names the very essence of Christianity was expressed. Thus in the Gospel, Christ calls Himself the Son of Man, He is called man only by the Godless Pilate. From this it is evident that Son of Man and man are not at all identical, as it is often considered. Pilate who, naturally, would not have recognized in Christ the Son of God denied Him even the name of Son of Man. God in the Gospel is most often called Father, but in the Old Testament, God of our fathers. From this it may be concluded that it is in sonship and paternity that the hypostatic essence of God and the redemptive mission of Christ lies. It is precisely the paternal nature of God that makes Him the All-Perfect Being. Fedorov writes: "Without the Son we cannot imagine love, knowledge, might, or life in God; with the Son Who is also love, mind, power and life we (that is, human sons) easily understand why the life of the Father is inexhaustible, that is to say, why it is immortal and eternal" (3, p. 124).

If God is our Father then His paternal love for us may be known only by our filial love which can be taught us through love for our earthly fathers. Fedorov writes: "Filial love is a necessary condition for the realization of unity. Without the Son neither union with God nor the brotherhood of mankind is possible... The whole Gospel of St. John is a continuous talk by the Son of God about His love of God the Father and requirement of the same love from all the sons of mankind. It is the same love of a child for his parents, but such as it should be in adulthood. In this love is the root of resurrection. This Gospel

is the expression of the unbounded love of the Son for his Father, love to the utmost likening (of one substance but not coalesced) of Himself to the Father. And the likeness of the Son to the Father lies in the fact that the Son too gives life just as the Father—resurrection is not only in the future but in the present too. St. John's Gospel is the supreme expression of Christianity" (3, pp. 126-127). Thus, Christ becomes the Saviour of the World because He is the Son of God, who became the Son of Man in order to reveal to those dwelling *in darkness and the shadow of death* that their salvation lay in the fact of cognizing themselves as sons who had ousted their fathers, and that by fulfilling the duty of resurrection they atoned for their guilt before God. Christ is the one and final Saviour just because filial love is the fulfilment of the Law.

But is there such a thing as filial love? It is not for nothing that in enumerating the kinds of love, filial love as a rule is not mentioned. Nevertheless, if filial love were not characteristic of man in principle, how could Christianity have grown and become established? Whence would love for the Heavenly Father have come if there were only indifference or at best, respect for earthly fathers? The insufficiency of filial love in man gives the answer to the fact why Christianity could not become the religion of each and all. Sonship, however, according to Fedorov, is not the essence of Christianity alone, but of human community in general, humanity as such. If Christianity is the most humane religion, it is such because of its all-human sonship, the filial love of all sons as of one son for all fathers, just as for the One Father. The essence of humaneness just as of Christianity, lies in sonship. Fedorov remarks perspicaciously: "A distinctive feature of man are images of parents, which remain in the hearts of sons after their death" (3, p. 134). Sonship, which is a link between the following and the preceding, the spiritual link of generations, is not broken by death; it permits us not only to understand the principal distinction between man and the world of Nature, but to comprehend, why there is still so little of humanity in us and so much of the animal. Because we are bad sons, we cannot realize ourselves as men. We do not love our fathers, that is why it does not even enter our heads that we are guilty of ousting them, moreover the ousting still continues. An awful contradiction of human nature, which is subjugated to blind Nature, is the fact that man is forced to oust those, ties with whom makes him man! The profound grief of sons over the death of their fathers, the inability to be reconciled with their death, as with the inability to raise them from death, led the sons of mankind to the thought of the Being Who was not subject to death and therefore capable of serving as the Source of resurrection and life. However, if the inability to be reconciled with the death of our fathers made us turn to the Almighty and Immortal Being, then the inability to stop the process of ousting tore away the idea of God from the minds of our fathers.

This contradiction was extremely tormenting for the psyche of mankind so that man ceased to understand that he needed God exactly as the Resurrector and, furthermore, he became incapable of realizing that resurrection was the Will of God, Whose instrument he should become. This contradiction received a transformed and fantastic reflection in the legends about the militant prodigal son—Don Juan, with numerous folklore and literary versions. Even S. Freud who is recognized as the greatest interpreter of the secrets of the subconscious, did not see the whole depth, the entire tragedy of this contradiction between the living ousting their fathers and brothers from life and forgetting them, and the dead involuntarily dominating over the living. And this was not discerned by the great psychologist just because the animal-like state of man seemed to him normal. He did not understand that any feeling of guilt, the realization of which according to Freud, constitutes improvement of health, has as its basis the most profound guiltiness of ousting sons before their ousted fathers, and that only the actual return of life to our fathers can bring back to us inner peace, harmony of soul. It was N. Fedorov who had revealed to mankind that it must realize its guilt before the dead, its guilt before the God of our fathers, and atone for it by a common act of piety with the help of Divine Grace.

Filial love, according to Fedorov is at present a feeling in project which must still be developed fully in mankind itself. Nevertheless, through the cloud of passions and vices there always glimmered a little star of filial love. Fedorov asks: "What began human society, sexual attraction or a filial feeling of compassion for their weakening parents, making the children in their adult strength and power not to abandon them?" (3, p. 396). And replies: "One who first, through a feeling of love, did not leave his parents to the very end, did not leave them while they were alive, although he could have lived separately being of age and ready for independent life, also did not leave them after their death, was, one might say, the first son of mankind to lay the family foundation, to begin a family life, a family religion (ancestor cult) and human society in general" (3, p. 135). Filial love was the first genuine feeling, the first thought of man. For the first man his father and mother were his God Creator. But in the Fall man drew away from this sonship. *Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother* (Gen. 2.24), this became a consequence of the Fall, and Fedorov apparently was the first to note this (3, p. 411). Having betrayed God, man by his betrayal was doomed to be neglected by his posterity and not only to be neglected but actively, though subconsciously, to oust his fathers. Nevertheless, filial love did not die completely otherwise the society of men would have ended. Fedorov writes: "Only by the word expressing the concept of 'father', a word to which was ascribed the power to arouse, to summon the fathers, could society have been created and upheld, a society, indestructible by death, that is, the human society. And whereas the power ascribed to this word in

relation to the dead fathers was imaginary, the conviction in the word's action was a mighty power which held the distant progeny in strong union. "In the name of the father" all the sons were held in a common spirit. Perhaps the Jewish society is still held together by their faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (3, pp. 517-518).

And indeed what had made these forefathers of the Jewish people so famous, why were they considered worthy to be the first proclaimers of the true religion, although from the point of view of our morals they were not always blameless? I presume, it was the sonship, love for their fathers, inferior only to their love for the God of their fathers that made them righteous. Abraham could not have revealed the true God to his son if they had not been in deep spiritual union, if their hearts had not been open to each other, if they had not lived one in the other. The subjective conviction of Abraham would have been of little significance to Isaac if he had not loved his father. The God of Abraham would not have become the God of Isaac if there had been a rift between their souls. Also the God of Abraham and Isaac would not have become the God of Jacob if Jacob had not felt deep unity with his fathers. Only a deep inner unity of a father and son could have brought about the fact that the God of the son had not become the father or an ancestor, that is to say, an image known in all its tangible concreteness, as it was with the pagans, but the inner, inaccessible to outside gaze, hidden spirit guiding the father.

However, even the Jews could not keep their loyalty to their fathers, rather the loyalty to the spirit of their fathers, although they did keep their faith in God the Father. That is why throughout the Old Testament times we hear curses and complaints against those sons who seemingly following the path of their direct fathers had left the path of the God of their fathers. It is not by chance that the last word in the Old Testament uniting it with the New Testament is the prophecy of Malachi on the forthcoming mutual return of the fathers' and sons' hearts to each other, which is the condition put forth for salvation from the eternal curse (Mal. 4.5-6). That is why we must look upon the New Testament namely as the teaching on the way to mutual return of the fathers' and sons' hearts to each other. Fedorov stresses: "The Son of God, sitting on the Throne with the Father and the Spirit, Christ together with Them, has become for us the model of filiality and fraternity raised up to the celestial throne and leading into the Kingdom of the Earth to which there should no longer be an end. And mankind would no longer have been like unto this Godhead, if the Son of Man had not been wholeheartedly, with compassionate love, in the graves of the fathers... Christianity would not have been boundless love if death had been its limit, it would have been the triumph not of love but of death over love and Christianity" (3, pp. 209-210).

If we meditate on the meaning of the principal moral commandments of Christ—the commandments to

love God and one's neighbour as well as to love one's enemies, and compare them we would see that all these commandments encompass the commandment of love for our fathers. And indeed, if the Lord unites the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament into two commandments of love, then the Old Testament veneration of the fathers should be changed to correspond with the spirit of Christian love for them. Furthermore it is easy to note that we cognize our descent from people very dear and near to us—our fathers, solely through faith, and not through knowledge, just as by faith we come to know the existence of God. That is why it is not difficult to understand that the fifth Old Testament commandment is the central commandment of the Decalogue, which unites duty to God and duties to one's neighbour so that the sincerity of love for God and our neighbour is tested above all by the sincerity of love for our fathers. If we doubt the existence of God then there are no less grounds to doubt our descent from the fathers. Just as for the majority of us it will seem an obvious nonsense to doubt our descent from the fathers it is just as absurd for a normal man to doubt the existence of God. The cause of doubt in the existence of God lies in the fall in disloyalty to our fathers which brought about the division to the human being, causing the rise of the philosophy for which there is nothing obvious, but everything doubtful, beginning from the existence of God and ending with the existence of one's neighbour (solipsism) or of oneself. Fedorov explains: "To speak of the origin of faith in God means to assume that in the beginning there was no faith, that man was created unbelieving. One should be speaking not of the origin of faith but of unbelief which was born through betrayal of our fathers" (3, p. 101).

Thus the commandment to love God and one's neighbour finds its focus in love for our fathers. Let us show now that love for our enemies is also part of the commandment to love our fathers. According to natural law the sons are the assassins of their fathers by ousting them out of life, although in most cases apart from and even against their will. But the relationship of the ousted and the ousters is that of the enemies. When we say the word "enemy" its deepest content is the rift between generations, their opposition to one another. The rift between the older and younger generations is the profoundest basis for any enmity in human society. All history may be looked upon as a struggle between two generations; the younger generation aspiring to dominate and the older striving to hold its sway. Such is the struggle in which there are no victors, for the victors in the end become the vanquished, the ousters become the ousted. The end of this struggle can only be either complete mutual destruction or unity of generations in the universal paternal cause. That is why the commandment to love one's enemies is identical with the commandment on mutual return of the hearts of sons and fathers.

This is the essence too of the parables of the Publican and the Pharisee, of the Prodigal Son, and of the Last Judgement, with which preparations are

made for Lent, that is, for the great work of Christianity. The fathers must stop being pharisees, exalting themselves by their virtues over their sons, but should admit their own guilt before their own fathers; the sons must cease to be prodigal, rejecting their fathers and striving to dominate instead of them, and also admit their guilt before their fathers. This is the mutual return of the sons' and fathers' hearts, the result of which must be the substitution of fruitless and suicidal mutual enmity with the recognition of common guilt of the living before the dead, and union of generations in the common cause of returning to the life of those who were ousted by blind strength, in order that the apparently unavoidable doomsday might be replaced with the day of universal resurrection in glory. Fedorov's formula "To live with all the living for all the dead", is the formula for mutual return of the sons' hearts to the fathers, the formula of victory over evil which is the seeming fatal rift between generations. When all the living realize that they are the sons of their dead fathers, realize their common duty and guilt before the dead, then the way will be opened by which the dead may be returned to life. With the awakening of filial love in mankind, love for its dead fathers, through the grace of God, everything will be possible for men.

Fedorov writes the following regarding this: "The believers know only what they should, the impossible is conceded only to individuals living separately in sin. As for people united like branches to the vine which is Christ, and whose vine-grower is the Father, there is nothing impossible however big or terrible the difficulties of the cause might be" (2, p. 386). Without filial love any project, not merely immortality but the radical lengthening of life, will be similar to the building of the Tower of Babel—doomed to failure because God's righteousness is not in it. To strive for the immortality of the living, or even substantially increasing the length of life not for the sake of resurrecting the dead, is impossible neither physically nor morally, as Fedorov stresses more than once. The immortality of the living without the resurrection of the dead is just as impossible a task as the making of the perpetual motion machine, with one difference that it carries within itself complete negation of morality. If the idea of resurrection seems mad to some it is the fruit of deep scepticism or the result of depression. Resurrection is demanded by the very moral nature of man, which cannot be reconciled with the triumph of evil and requires the substitution of physical necessity with the moral law of world love.

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A. GILYANOV



CHAPEL OF THE BLESSED KSENIA AT THE SMOLENSKOYE CEMETERY IN ST. PETERSBURG



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